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# THE Atlantic

OCTOBER 2007

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THE VALUES ISSUE

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CHARITY—AND HIMSELF

by JONATHAN RAUCH

THE GIVING GENE

by OLIVIA JUDSON

HOW TO BE A  
MORAL INVESTOR

by HENRY BLODGET

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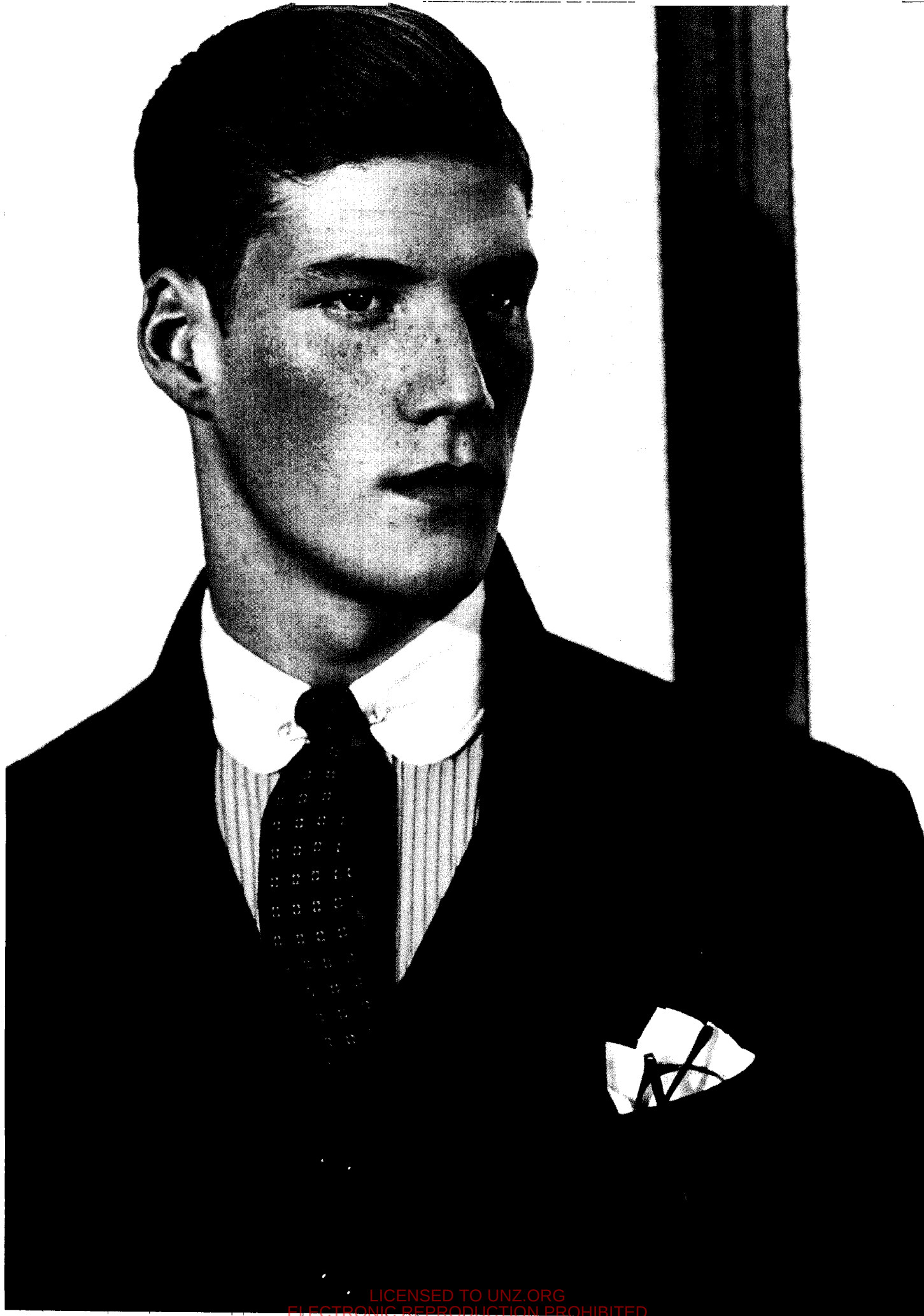
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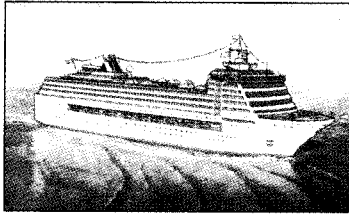


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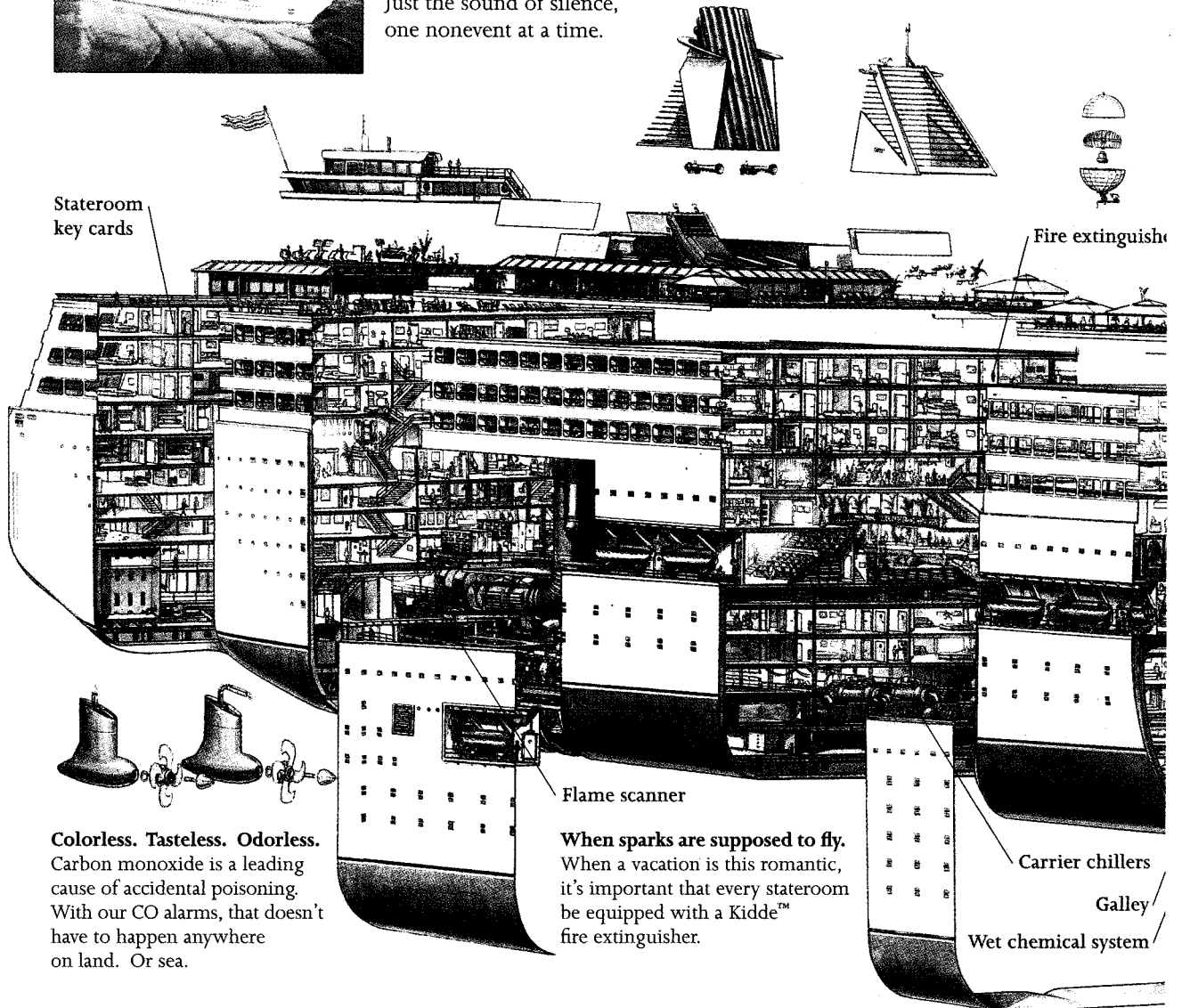
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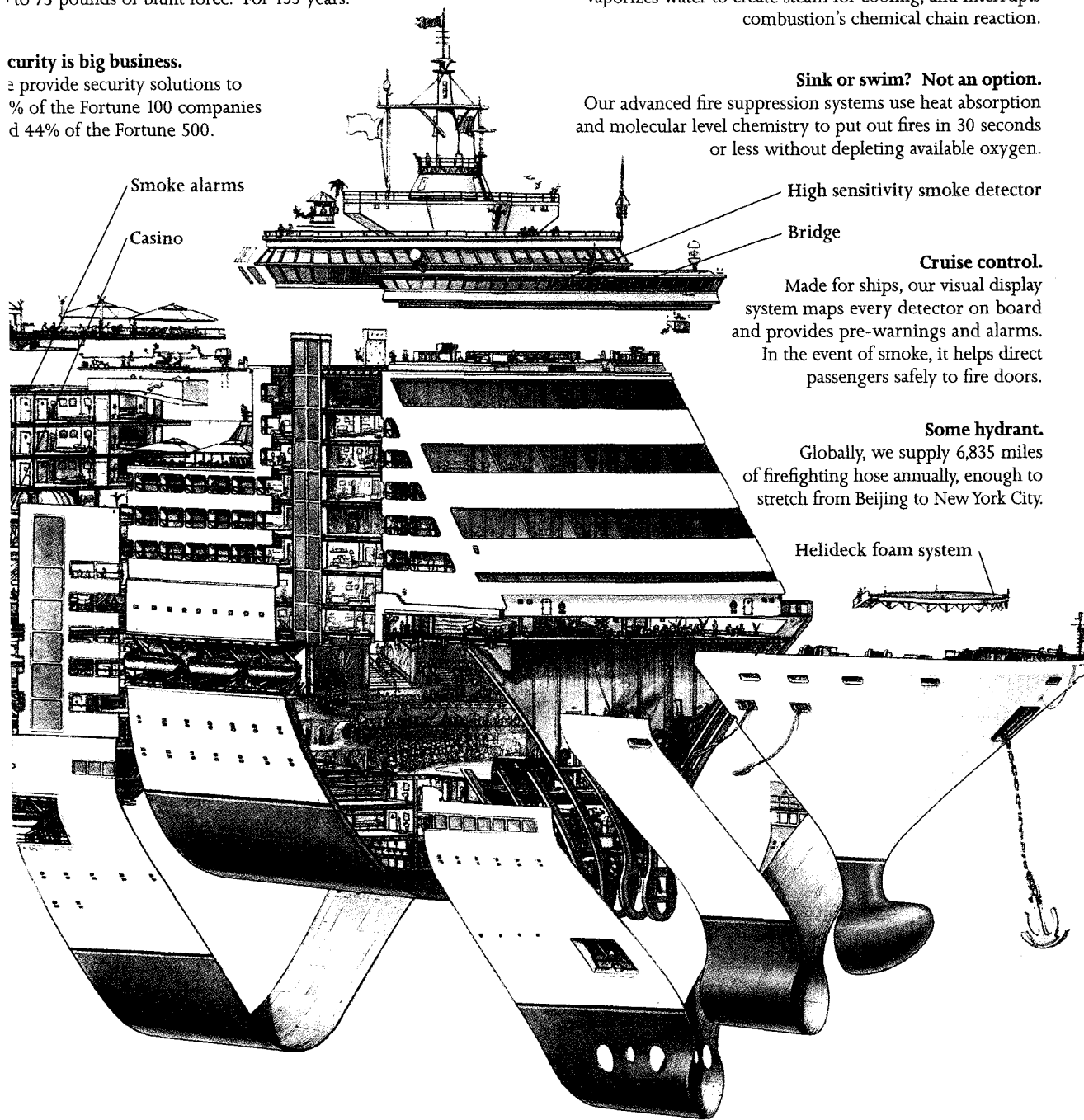
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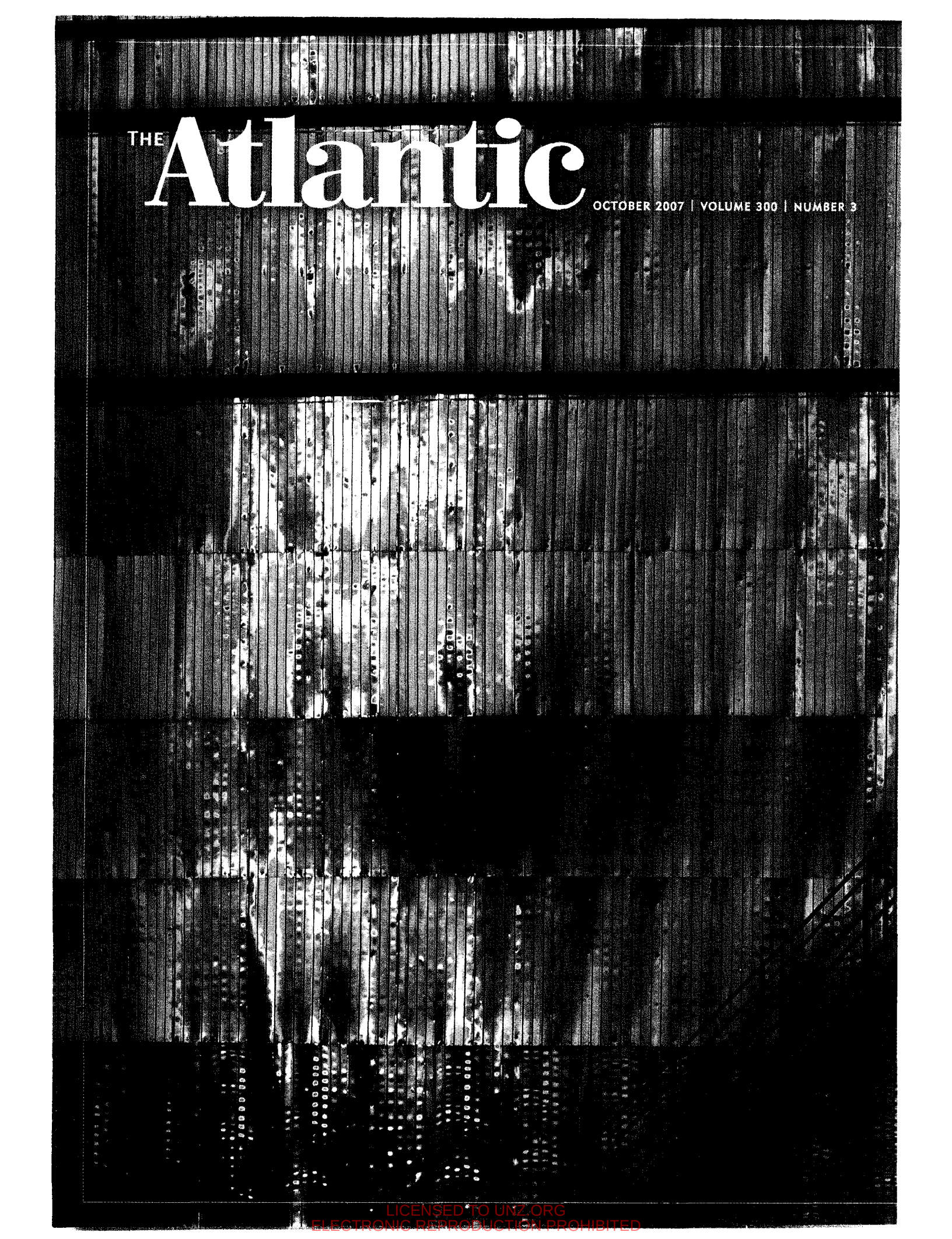
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How Bill Clinton, Ira Magaziner, and a team of management consultants are creating new markets, reinventing philanthropy—and trying to save the world  
*by Jonathan Rauch*

## 78 THE CONSCIENTIOUS INVESTOR

Socially responsible investing is neither as profitable nor as responsible as advertised. But if you insist, here's how to do it right.  
*by Henry Blodget*

## 90 THE SELFLESS GENE

It's easy to see how evolution can account for the dark streaks in human nature—the violence, treachery, and cruelty. But how does it produce kindness, gentleness, and heroism?  
*by Olivia Judson*

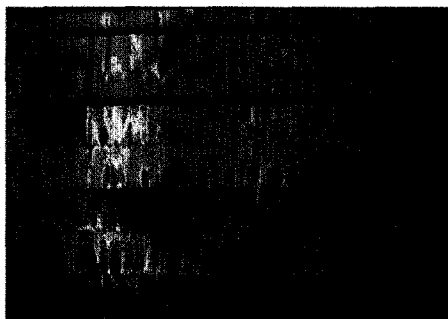
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What the future holds for Pakistan—and for America  
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THE **Atlantic**

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A worker descends a staircase at an oil-production facility in Sudan. Controversial companies—such as those that do business with repressive regimes like Sudan's—create dilemmas for would-be socially responsible investors, as Henry Blodget details in "The Conscientious Investor."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL FREEMAN/CORBIS

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### SLIDESHOW: A HAPPY PLACE

Mark Jenkins, author of this month's Travels article, narrates photos from Bhutan, where the phallus is a celebrated symbol and the government monitors the Gross National Happiness.

### INTERVIEW: SURVIVAL OF THE KINDEST

Olivia Judson, author of "The Selfless Gene," discusses the evolutionary roots of altruism and fellow feeling.

### INTERVIEW: THE PAKISTAN QUESTION

Joshua Hammer, author of "After Musharraf," talks with *Atlantic* senior editor Joy de Menil about Pakistan's future and its implications for the United States.

**PLUS:** BLOG POSTS BY ANDREW SULLIVAN, JAMES FALLOWS, AND MORE



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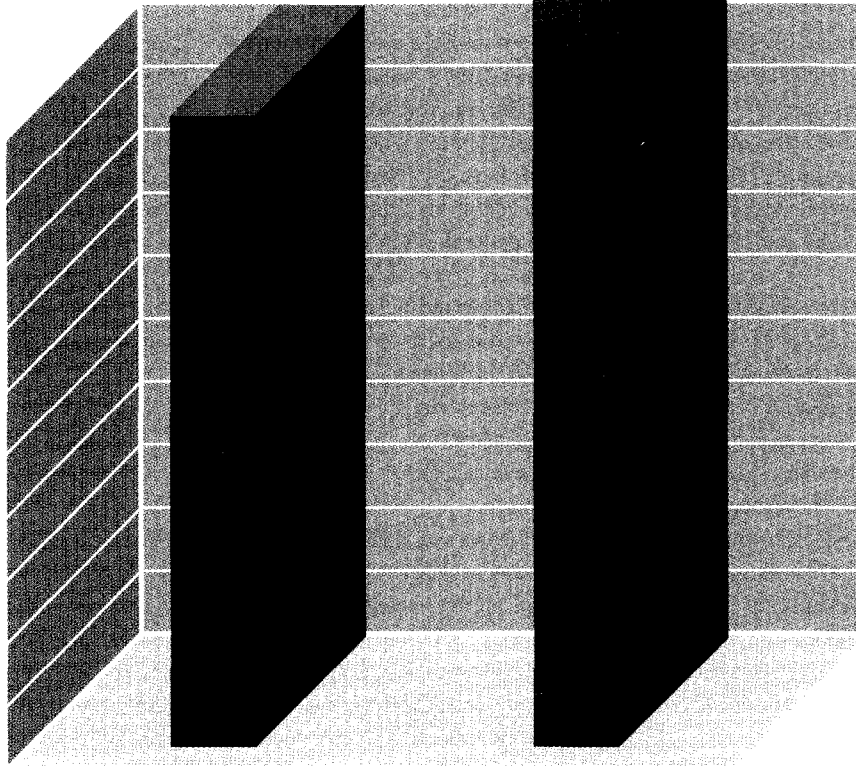
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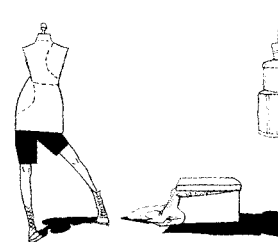
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OCTOBER 2007 THE ATLANTIC



## DEBATING CHINA'S RISE

James Fallows asserts that because China's rise has lifted millions of Chinese out of poverty while providing U.S. consumers with cheap goods, it must be a win-win for both countries ("China Makes, the World Takes," July/August *Atlantic*). The more complex reality is that China's rise is imposing great costs on countries around the world—and within China itself.

China's competitive advantage in world manufacturing markets is largely due to a web of illegal export subsidies, rampant counterfeiting and piracy, a grossly undervalued currency, and lax environmental and health and safety regulations. While they have benefited the American firms and other multinational companies that are offshoring to China, these mercantilist practices have put tens of millions of people out of work around the world—from the American Rust Belt to Mexican maquiladoras to the markets of Lesotho.

While the tens of millions of Chinese peasants flooding into coastal Chinese factories may indeed be better off than they were on the farm, more than a *billion* Chinese are left paying a very heavy price. China is now the most polluted and dangerous place to work in the world, and unscrupulous developers in league with Communist Party apparatchiks regularly seize peasant land without just compensation.

China continues to build one new coal plant every *week* to feed its heavy-manufacturing model, and its toxic Chinese smog, or "chog," regularly rides the jet stream to visit Americans as they leave their Wal-Marts with cheap Chinese goods. And it is no small irony that Fallows's Panglossian ode came out at the same time as a raft of news stories about the contaminated, cancerous, and defective Chinese products now flooding the world.

Meanwhile, China's imperial misadventures in Africa and Latin America—to obtain oil, timber, and other natural resources—have been well documented. So, too, has China's facilitation of genocide in Darfur and nuclear proliferation in Iran in exchange for access to oil and natural gas. Last, but hardly least, China is using its economic gains to fuel a military buildup and develop an increasingly sophisticated array of "asymmetrical weaponry" aimed at the U.S. satellite system that for the last several decades has allowed U.S. military forces to hold the ultimate strategic high ground: space.

*Peter Navarro*  
Laguna Beach, Calif.

James Fallows's "China Makes, the World Takes" misleads readers by arguing that the "smiley curve" indicates that a revaluation of China's yuan [also known as the RMB] would have little effect on the U.S. trade deficit with China. According to that polemical concept, each \$2 worth of Chinese labor supports products valued at about \$30, with the balance of the value added being contributed by U.S. capital, technology, and skilled labor. Therefore, Fallows argues, revaluing the yuan and removing all Chinese subsidies to manufacturing, and raising the cost of Chinese labor to \$4, would raise the price of Chinese exports to the United States a negligible 7 percent.

While such math might apply to a few products, it cannot be typical of all imports from China. In 2006, total U.S. goods imported from China were \$288 billion, and applying Fallows's math would imply that Chinese imports are supporting 14 times that value to the U.S. gross domestic product. That comes to \$4 trillion, or 31 percent of the U.S. GDP. In 2006, the GDP generated by all U.S. goods-producing industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, and manufacturing) came to less than \$2 trillion.

Either the U.S. GDP is grossly undercounted, or Fallows is wrong.

If the exchange rate did not matter, Chinese authorities would be happy to revalue the yuan. Even if one accepts the argument that China requires a managed exchange rate to promote stability within its rickety financial sector, the Chinese government could peg the yuan at 4 to the dollar instead of 7.6. Exchange rates are prices, and prices do matter. If they didn't, Beijing wouldn't cling so tightly to its present policies.

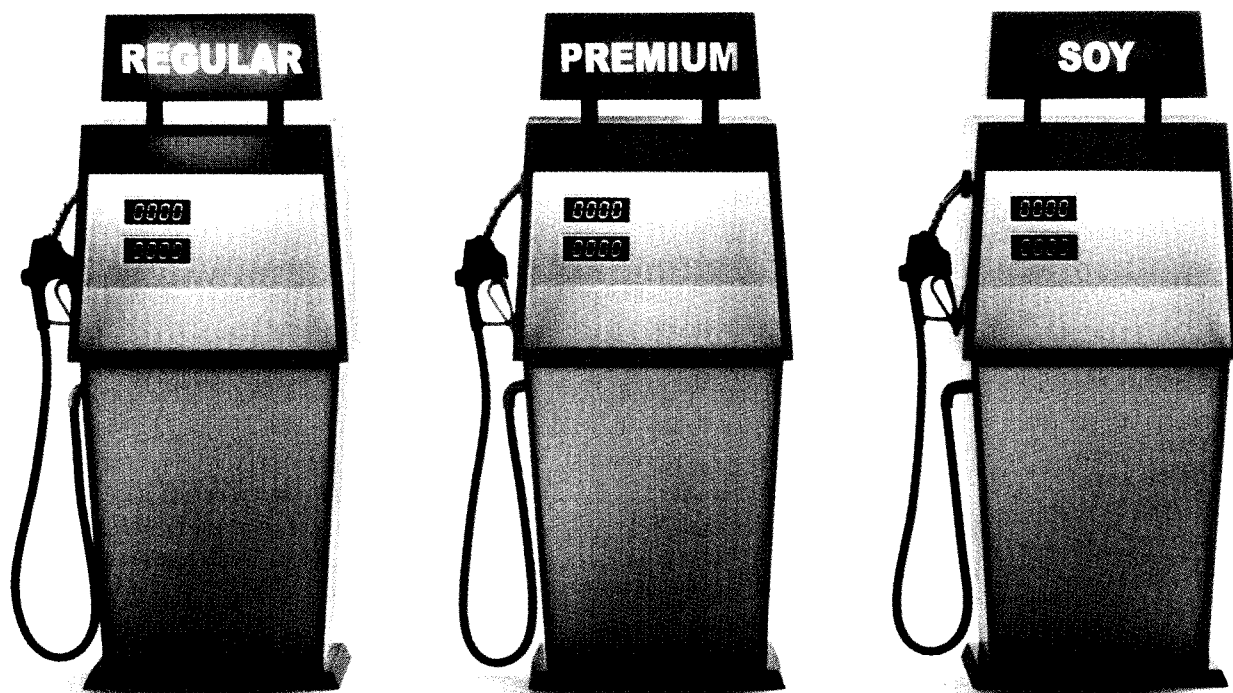
*Peter Morici*  
Robert H. Smith School of Business  
University of Maryland  
College Park, Md.

After noting the competition faced by some rich-world workers from their developing-world counterparts, James Fallows concludes: "With no trade barriers, there would be no reason why the average person in, say, Holland would be better off than the average one in India." But there is. An average Dutch person is more productive in the marketplace due to his or her better education, health, institutional environment, and access to capital, and so he or she will always earn a higher wage.

Later in the article, Fallows discusses European subsidies to Airbus, and urges Americans to be aware that "Boeing sells fewer airplanes and employs fewer engineers than it presumably would without competition from Airbus." True, but that says very little about the overall employment prospects for American engineers. In fact, the demand for them has constantly outstripped supply. Instead of being alarmed, Americans should send a thank-you note to European taxpayers for subsidizing world airplane production, so that America is able to allocate its scarce engineering talent to other uses.

*Nimish Adhia*  
Chicago, Ill.





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James Fallows's take on China is based on the same underlying assumption that clouds much of the debate over whether globalization is good for the developing world's poor—namely, that if peasants are to achieve a higher quality of life, they themselves will have to purchase it, with the money they earn from “paying jobs.” While a bit of pocket money can bring with it better access to housing, health care, education, and sustenance, philanthropic efforts can achieve the same basic advancements—and without the added costs associated with large-scale, semi-forced migrations to urban ghettos. I'm not qualified to say how much more expensive it would be for the developed world to simply give away a better quality of life for the undeveloped world's peasants, but given the high costs that come along with the benefits that Fallows describes, finding out would seem worthwhile.

Josh Miner  
La Crosse, Wis.

The caption for the photograph on page 68 refers to “chip resistors displayed in martini glasses,” but the photograph doesn't show any chip resistors. Chip resistors, which have contributed to the miniaturization of all sorts of electronic devices for more than 30 years, look like tiny ceramic tiles; the photograph shows axial-lead resistors, which are tens or even hundreds of times more voluminous than chip resistors. These have been around since vacuum-tube days, when miniaturization didn't matter so much. (The identification of the containers as martini glasses, however, is consistent with my experience.)

Peter M. Jacobson  
Chanhassen, Minn.

### James Fallows replies:

*Peter Navarro's letter is a summary of the argument in his recent book, The Coming China Wars. Without giving a book-length answer, let me say: I agree, and said in the article, that environmental devastation is the most ominous part of China's industrial rise. I agree, and said in the article, that economic interactions are not*

*always “win-win,” and that the relationship with China holds perils for America in the long run. But I presented the evidence for thinking that so far, the China-U.S. interaction has been beneficial overall for both sides. I disagree with most other assertions in Navarro's letter and his book, including his claim that China's success is “largely” due to illegal subsidies. That may be a comforting view for Americans, but based on what I have seen, it is a simplistic one. Readers should certainly read Navarro's book to see his argument in its full version. The notes section of his book begins, “Much of the research conducted for this book was done over the Internet.” All of the research for my article was done on-scene in factories and trading companies in China.*

*I also agree with Peter Morici that one example I gave—Ethernet cables that cost \$2 from the factory in Shenzhen but sell for up to \$30 in America—is not statistically representative of all China-U.S. trade. And it certainly is true that a continued rise in the RMB's value against the dollar (it has gone up by about 6 percent in the year-plus I have been in China) would have some effect on trade flows. The question is whether the likely effect is big enough to justify a focus on this as a main matter in U.S.-China trade.*

*Would a stronger RMB move manufacturing jobs “back” to the American heartland? I have asked this question now of nearly 100 U.S., Taiwanese, and mainland-Chinese company officials running factories here, and not a single one has said yes. Instead, they say they would move factories from “expensive” locations in coastal China to cheaper non-U.S. sites: inland China, Southeast Asia, India, in some cases eastern Europe, the Caribbean, or Mexico. That would reduce China's global trade surplus but not necessarily improve the U.S. trade situation. Obviously, American exporters—from Boeing to MGM to Napa Valley wineries—would do better in China with a weaker dollar and stronger RMB. But these same companies don't say that exchange rates are the main obstacle they are coping with. The U.S.-China Business Council, which represents all major U.S.*



firms doing business in China, polls its members each year on the main problems they have in China. In recent surveys, exchange rates have not been among the top 10 issues of concern. (Companies say that counterfeiting, "rule of law" issues, etc., matter more.)

To be clear: The RMB is now undervalued, and the Chinese government is artificially slowing the currency's inevitable rise. But while American politicians act as if this were the main reason for unbalanced China-U.S. trade, people actually buying from and selling to China say it's a secondary issue.

Nimish Adhia's point about Airbus brings us back to the first-principles question of whether expanded trade is always and necessarily "win-win," even when one side is deliberately subsidizing high-tech industries. That can't be resolved here: I'll simply say that I think the effects are more complicated than the letter suggests. As for Holland versus India, my point was that in earlier

times, simply being born within an advanced nation entitled most residents to a permanently higher living standard than a person of the same skills, education, ambition, etc., in a poorer country. More and more, that advantage has to be earned—which is good in a moral sense but is disruptive in the richer countries.

Meanwhile, the issues Josh Miner raises are important but are beyond what I could deal with in the article, or here.

As for Peter Jacobson, his complaint is with the Chinese merchants who labeled the items "chip resistors" in the sales tags shown in our photo. I assure him that this is very far from the most egregious case of imprecise English labeling in China.

#### SAFETY FIRST?

Kudos to Caitlin Flanagan for her thoughtful and well-researched article "Babes in the Woods" (July/August *Atlantic*). As a parent of two young children and a co-founder of Club Penguin, a children's Web site referenced in the

article, I share her commitment to keeping children safe online. In fact, the decision to build Club Penguin grew out of a desire to create a fun, virtual world that I and the site's other two founders would feel safe letting our own children visit.

Although Flanagan mentions that Club Penguin has "paid professionals" who monitor activity and chatting on the site, she fails to explain some of the other safety features that make Club Penguin unique. When parents register their child(ren) on Club Penguin, they choose one of two chat options: "Ultimate Safe Chat" limits online conversation to a predefined menu of greetings, questions, and statements; "Standard Safe Chat" allows players to type their own messages, but each one first goes through a sophisticated filter that blocks inappropriate words, phrases, and personal information such as names and phone numbers.

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Proudest accomplishment ..... my daughter says "please" and "thank you"

Perfect day ..... coffee/playground/nap/exercise/flea market/  
Playground/bath time/dinner with grownups/  
See a great movie/asleep by 9pm\*

Most unusual gift ..... a bat skeleton

Recent impulse buy ..... a case of soup!

Retail therapy ..... pushing a cart around a big suburban "superstore"  
while drinking a giant fountain soda.

Can't shop without ..... getting hungry

My card ..... makes sure the funny stuff stays on  
my show and not on my bill.

\* this day might not be possible

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EVEN IF THE SITE SAYS YOU CAN'T?

ARE YOU IN PIECES  
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record. Since we launched, in October 2005, we have recorded no incidents of predatory behavior and have received high praise from children, parents, educators, and Internet-safety experts around the world.

*Lane Merrifield, CEO  
Club Penguin  
Kelowna, British Columbia*

Nowhere does Caitlin Flanagan's lengthy piece about MySpace predators tell us why this phenomenon is important. There are 40-plus million regular MySpace users, but how many actual cases exist of teens being killed, seduced, or otherwise harmed by predators they met online? In a country in which 4,500 teens ages 12 to 17 were murdered in the last five years, Internet predation is so vanishingly rare that police, news reporters, and Net Nanny hawkers have to recycle the same few cases over and over. Teens encounter far more danger in church (where in recent years hundreds were sexually abused) and from adults who supervise them (100,000 12- to 17-year-olds were confirmed victims of violent, sexual, or psychological abuse in 2005, and 100 were murdered by parents and caretakers) than from anyone they might meet online.

Refuting the panic that cyber-messages are destroying girls' psyches, long-term surveys find girls themselves saying they're happier, less lonely, less depressed, physically safer, more optimistic about the future, and more eager to assume leadership roles than their mothers' generation said it was 30 to 40 years ago. Measures of violent death, suicide, rape, early pregnancy, and educational achievement confirm that girls have never been safer or better behaved.

*Mike Males  
Santa Cruz, Calif.*

#### **Caitlin Flanagan replies:**

*A variety of law-enforcement agencies, rape-crisis centers, and child-safety organizations are struggling to get exact statistics on how many sexual assaults result from contact initiated*

*on the Internet. In reporting the essay, I attended an eye-opening presentation at my children's elementary school. The subject was Internet safety, and the presenters were two FBI agents and two attorneys from a rape-treatment center. I encourage parents of school-age children to consider hosting a similar event. Protecting children begins with understanding the danger the Internet poses. We have no control over the content that profiteers and pornographers put on the Web, but we have complete control over our children's access to it.*

#### **FATHER KNOWS LEAST**

In "Who's Your Daddy?" (July/August *Atlantic*), Steve Olson makes an irresponsible leap: "In graduate school," he writes, "genetics students typically are taught that 5 to 10 percent of the men on birth certificates are not the biological fathers of their children," and then goes on to say "in other words, as many as one in every seven men who proudly carry their newborn children out of a hospital could be a cuckold." Given that one-third of children in the United States are born to unmarried women, and that nearly 21 percent are being raised by single mothers, it would be safer to assume that a large proportion of those children aren't being carried out of the hospital by any man, proud or not.

*Katherine Melcher  
Oakland, Calif.*

#### **THE INSIDER**

It was heartening to read that Senator Harry Reid's office was immediately available to help Harlan Coben get a VIP check-in and room upgrade at Las Vegas's Luxor Hotel ("Paperback Writer," July/August *Atlantic*). I assume this service, subsidized by taxpayers, is available to citizens who are not famous writer friends of the senator?

*Michael McWatters  
New York, N.Y.*

#### **ADVICE AND CONSENT**

Ann Patchett's "The Love Between Two Women Is Not Normal" (*Atlantic* Fiction Issue) quotes me as saying, "The

love between two women is not normal," which was taken out of context and omits a word from the original quote in the *Anderson Independent-Mail*. What I said, as quoted in that newspaper's story, was, "The friendship and the love portrayed in the book are not exemplary. The love between the two women is not normal. We should have a broader range of books to choose from. We should be able to make our own choices."

The omission of the definite article *the* before the words *two women* changes the entire meaning of the quote from a specific reference to the unhealthy nature of the friendship between Patchett and Lucy Grealy portrayed in the book to a blanket statement against lesbianism. Patchett writes, "Ms. See had finally come out and said the thing that no one else had the nerve to mention: Lucy and I must have been having sex with each other." This was not my view, and I never said or implied anything along those lines.

There is no mistaking this as anything other than a purposeful misrepresentation of what I said and who I am. Ironically enough, Patchett expresses my feelings about this misrepresentation best in the *Atlantic* article itself: "To be charged with a crime you've committed is one thing, but a special kind of bewilderment comes of being wrongly accused, and I believed I had been wrongly accused."

*Amanda See  
Mt. Pleasant, S.C.*

#### **Ann Patchett replies:**

*I apologize to Amanda See for misquoting her in my essay. The elimination of the article the from her sentence was careless on my part, and the responsibility for the mistake is entirely my own. What she did say—"The love between the two women is not normal"—speaks directly to the point of the piece, and I'd have surely used that sentence. I am glad to know that See does not stand in judgment of lesbians, but I still find it troubling that she sees herself fit to publicly judge the normalcy of the deep love my friend Lucy Grealy and I shared.*

# Does the Universe have a Purpose?

## Unlikely.

**Perhaps you hoped for a stronger statement, one way or the other.**

**But as a scientist I don't believe I can make one.** While nothing in biology, chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy, or cosmology has



ever provided direct evidence of purpose in nature, science can never unambiguously

prove that there is no such purpose. As Carl Sagan said, in another context: Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

Of course, nothing would stop science from uncovering positive evidence of divine guidance and purpose if it were attainable. For example, tomorrow night if we look up at the stars and they have been rearranged into a pattern that reads, "I am here," I think even the most hard-nosed scientific skeptic would suspect something was up.

But no such unambiguous signs have been uncovered among the millions and millions of pieces of data we have gleaned about the natural world over centuries of exploration. And this is precisely why a scientist can conclude that it is very unlikely that there is any divine purpose. If a creator had such a purpose, she could choose to demonstrate it a little more clearly to the inhabitants of her creation.

One is always free, as some people do, to interpret the laws of nature as signs of purpose, as for example Pope Pius did when Belgian physicist-priest George Lemaitre demonstrated that Einstein's

general theory of relativity implied the universe had a beginning. The Pope interpreted this as scientific proof of Genesis, but Lemaitre asked him to stop saying this. The big bang, as it has become known, can be interpreted in terms of a divine beginning, but it can equally be interpreted as removing God from the equation entirely. The conclusion is in the mind of the beholder, and it is outside of the realm of scientific theory and prediction...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Lawrence M. Krauss is a professor of physics and astronomy at Case Western Reserve University and the director of the Center for Education and Research in Cosmology and Astrophysics.*

## Yes.

**Consider this question: Do the Earth and mankind have a purpose? If so, then the universe does too, ipso facto.** If not, the universe might still have (some other) purpose; but I don't have to face that contingency, because I believe we do have one...

Namely, to defeat and rise above our animal natures; to create goodness, beauty, and holiness where only physics and animal life once existed; to create what might be (if we



succeed) the only tiny pinprick of goodness in the universe—which is otherwise (so far as we know)

morally null and void. If no other such project exists anywhere in the cosmos, our victory would change the nature of the universe. If there are similar projects elsewhere, more power to them; but our own task remains unchanged.

But why rise above and not blend into nature? Equivalently, from a Western viewpoint: why did the Judeo-Christian tradition replace the pagan idea of gods made in man's image with a revolutionary inversion, man made in God's? Why should we be goaded not to be ourselves but to be better than ourselves?

Why seek goodness?

Because most humans desire goodness. For most (not all!) humans, this urge is easily ignored in the short term, but nearly impossible to uproot over the long haul.

Males (and females) desire sex, too; but if a male had somehow grown up without seeing a woman, this desire would (probably) remain vague and unformed. Humans desire goodness; but until the Judeo-Christian revelation this desire was, at least for Western humanity, vague and unformed...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*David Gelernter is a professor of computer science at Yale University and a national fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.*

## Certainly.

**But first let me explain. A common scientific view is that evolution occurs simply because matter obeys some unseen law whereby a simple organism will, if it evolves at all, become a more complex one.** Evolution is thus a blind process without purpose and science will one day uncover the simple mechanical rules underlying every seeming mystery. Our own lives, therefore, are equally without purpose. There is no place here for the spirit, the immortal soul.

Many people find this hard or impossible to accept. Even that great scientist Albert Einstein sustained a mystical outlook on li



that was, he said, constantly renew from the wonder and humility that filled him when he gazed at the

stars. I wonder, can our finite mind ever truly understand such things as eternity and infinity? My own thinking requires a beginning and an ending, an alpha and omega. "In the beginning was the Word," says the Bible. Yes, of course—the big bang. But it is impossible to imagine "nothingness" before the cosmic eruption...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Jane Goodall is the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and a UN Messenger of Peace.*

## No.

**In the absence of evidence, the only reason to suppose that it does is sentimental wishful thinking and sentimental wishful thinking, which underlies all religion, is an unreliable tool for the discovery of truth of any kind.**

The extension of analogies is another tool that accompanies wishful thinking in the toolboxes of the credulous. That an intricate mechanism, such as an engine or even a spoon, is commonly



associated with a purpose cannot be taken to be evidence that the universe as a whole is associated with

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pose, any more than the existence of a cheetah implies that it has been designed with a purpose in mind. Cheetahs have evolved by a bloody, directionless, unguided process of evolution: they have not been provided for the purpose of killing antelopes. Similarly, the universe has evolved over its 14 billion years of current existence in a directionless, unguided process that are manifestations of the working out of physical laws: it has not been made for the purpose of providing platforms for noble cheetahs to stalk their prey or humans to generate great art or to entertain delusions. That we do not yet understand anything about the inception of the universe would not mean that we need to ascribe to its inception a supernatural cause, a creator, and therefore associate with that creator's inscrutable mind a purpose, whether benevolent, malignant, or even whimsically capricious.

Biologists typically focus on questions that they have invented for their own puzzlement. Some biologists are perplexed by the nature of life after death, a notion they have invented without a scrap of evidence...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Atkins is a fellow and professor of chemistry in Lincoln College, Oxford.*

## Indeed.

**It is not possible to know that looking at the natural world alone. The question of purpose is closely related to the question of whether something like the God of stern monotheistic religions can be known to exist by studying**

the order, goodness, and grandeur of the universe. Already around 1750 David Hume pointed out that if one is looking at evidence of design, then all of the evidence must be taken into account: not only order and goodness but disorder and evil as well. He seems to think that some sort of creator is possible (in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, published posthumously in 1779, it is not clear which character represents Hume's own views).



But if so, we can know next to nothing about the creator's qualities: an intelligence, for all we know, as

much like ours as our intelligence is like the rotting of a turnip—one deity or a team; alive or dead; a juvenile or superannuated deity. Nothing can be known of any plan for the future perfection of the world or the human condition.

If one cannot infer the purposes of a benevolent creator from evidence in the natural world, then how can I (and my co-religionists) claim to know the world's purpose? The answer is too complicated to spell out here, but I take it to involve detailed comparisons of competing traditions on the basis of the support they draw from their own peculiar kinds of evidence (for Christians, historical events as in the life of Jesus and the early church, and carefully evaluated religious experiences). In addition, each tradition must be evaluated on the basis of the intellectual crises it faces. Two crises facing what I call the scientific naturalist tradition (originating in Hume's and others' writings) are the questions of

whether it is possible adequately to explain the phenomenon of religion naturalistically, and whether the tradition can provide grounds for morality...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Nancey Murphy is a professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary.*

## Yes.

**Frankly, I am psychologically incapable of believing that the universe is meaningless. I believe the universe has a purpose, and our greatest intellectual challenge as human beings is to glimpse what this purpose might be.**

My belief is not the result of a blinding flash of a road-to-Damascus revelation. Nor is it the imprint of a nurturing home environment. Kindergartners in their simplicity ask many profound questions, but the purpose of the universe is rarely among them.



Maturing teenagers in their angst may ask, "What's the meaning of it all?" The question is existential, but the answer is subtle. Understanding emerges not in thunder, earthquake and fire, but in the still small voice of the universe itself.

Quite possibly, the purpose of the universe is to provide a congenial home for self-conscious creatures who can ask profound questions and who can probe the nature of the universe itself.

Only gradually did I come to appreciate how magnificently tuned the universe is for the emergence of intelligent life. Carbon atoms, with their self-bonding properties,

provide the immense variety for the complex cellular machinery—no other atom offers a comparable range of possibilities...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Owen Gingerich is professor emeritus of astronomy and of the history of science at Harvard University and a senior astronomer emeritus at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.*

## Not Sure.

**Anyone who expresses a more definitive response to the question is claiming access to knowledge**



not based on empirical foundations. This remarkably persistent way of thinking, common

to most religions and some branches of philosophy, has failed badly in past efforts to understand, and thereby predict the operations of the universe and our place within it.

To assert that the universe has a purpose implies the universe has intent. And intent implies a desired outcome. But who would do the desiring? And what would a desired outcome be? That carbon-based life is inevitable? Or that sentient primates are life's neurological pinnacle? Are answers to these questions even possible without expressing a profound bias of human sentiment? Of course humans were not around to ask these questions for 99.9999% of cosmic history. So if the purpose of the universe was to create humans then the cosmos was embarrassingly inefficient about it...

CONTINUED ONLINE.

*Neil deGrasse Tyson is an astrophysicist and the director of New York City's Hayden Planetarium.*

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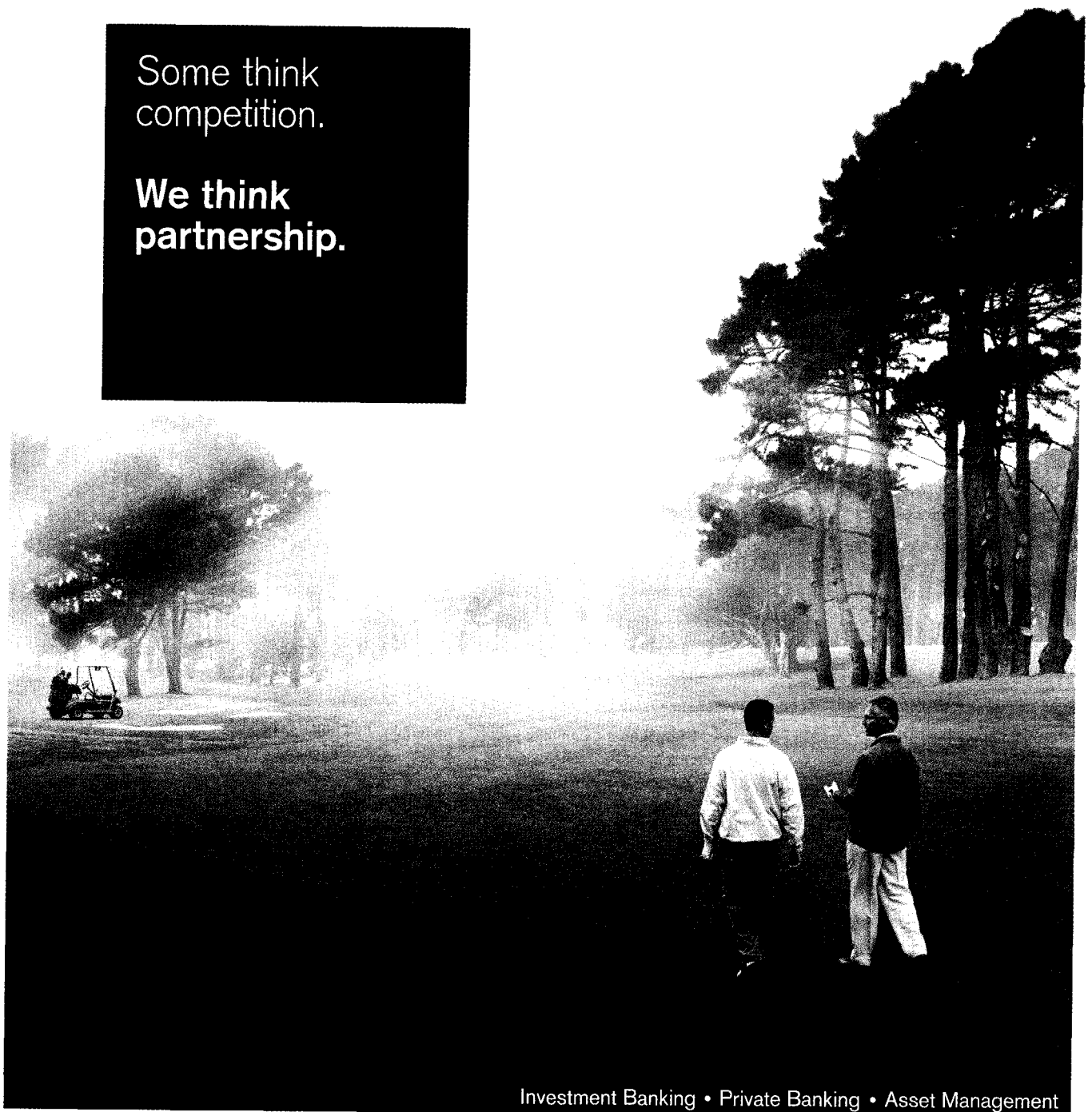
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# THE AGENDA

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## COMMENT

Has presidential power reached its zenith under Bush? Don't bet on it.

# Commanding Heights

BY CHARLIE SAVAGE

In January 2001, the members of the Bush-Cheney administration's new legal team gathered in the wood-paneled office of their boss, White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales, whose freshly unpacked family pictures and Texas mementos lined the bookshelves. After a genial introduction, Gonzales got down to business. The new president, he said, had given them two mandates. First, they were to push conservative judicial nominees quickly into the confirmation pipeline. And second, they were to seize opportunities, wherever they lay, to protect and expand presidential power. The institution had been weakened by George W. Bush's predecessors, Gonzales said, and the new president wanted them

"to make sure that he left the presidency in better shape than he found it."

To at least one of the assembled lawyers, this second priority seemed at the time to be an injunction to help repair the damage Bill Clinton's scandals had done to the White House. But it now seems clear that something far more sweeping was being set in motion: the realization of Vice President Dick Cheney's dream of restoring what the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. had called the "imperial presidency"—the era of unchecked executive power that peaked during the Nixon administration, when Cheney began his political career.

Taken one by one, the Bush administration's efforts to expand presidential

power seem familiar. Piled together, they are startling. The administration has asserted a power to imprison Americans without charges, to bypass laws such as those governing wiretapping and torture, to set aside the Geneva Conventions and scrap other major treaties without consulting the Senate, and more. It has rebuffed oversight and has expanded secrecy. And it has tightened White House control over federal agencies through an explosion of "signing statements" appended to new legislation, instructing the executive branch that it can ignore vast swaths of laws that restrict the president's authority.

It may seem that this presidency's most aggressive expansions of executive

power have been curbed. The new Democratic Congress has launched many oversight hearings. Five of nine Supreme Court justices have held that presidents must obey the Geneva Conventions and need congressional permission to set up military commissions.

But the aftermath of the Nixon presidency suggests that any ebbing of presidential power from its new high-water mark may be only temporary. Richard Nixon had sought unchecked power on many fronts—he expanded secrecy, spied on his political enemies, fired the special prosecutor who was investigating him, and kept the Vietnam War going for two years after Congress revoked its authorization. Vietnam and Watergate eventually prompted Congress to impose new controls on executive power. Among

when he pulled the United States out of a mutual-defense pact with Taiwan. Ronald Reagan's legal team invented the "Unitary Executive Theory," which undercuts the authority of Congress to regulate the executive branch. The imperial presidency was largely restored before Bush took office. While Cheney claimed that he and Bush were filling in a valley of executive power, they were actually building atop a mountain.

Indeed, presidential power has been mostly growing—in fits and starts—since World War II. An early-20th-century president, such as Calvin Coolidge, had no large standing army to command, nor a CIA to use for covert operations. He would not have dreamed of launching a major overseas war without permission from Congress—as Harry Truman

decisions about going to war and broad authority to regulate how the executive branch carried out its work.

Of course, since then the government has grown in ways that necessarily increased the authority of presidents, because newly created bureaucracies fall under their day-to-day management. But it was not inevitable that checks and balances would simultaneously shrink. The erosion of controls on the presidency is the achievement of several generations of "presidentialists." Convinced that the modern world is too dangerous and complex for the president's hands to be tied, they have taken advantage of the fact that even the most vigilant Congress has only limited and politically difficult options for resisting executive overreach.

And, of course, lawmakers are not always vigilant. During Bush's first six years, a friendly Congress largely abandoned oversight while passing laws that broadened the president's power over detainees and strengthened his ability to impose martial law. Today, Congress has changed, but those laws remain on the books. And the administration's departures from traditional restraints and its novel assertions of power are now historical precedents.

In 1944, Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson warned that each new assertion of executive power, once validated into precedent, lies about "like a loaded weapon ready for the hand of any authority that can bring forward a plausible claim of an urgent need. Every repetition imbeds that principle more deeply in our law and thinking and expands it to new purposes."

In the six decades since, presidents of both parties have seldom hesitated to use all the powers available to them. So what will future presidents do with the arsenal they will inherit from Bush and Cheney? So far, the 2008 candidates have volunteered little about what limits, if any, they would respect if entrusted with the presidency. It's time to start asking. ■

Charlie Savage covers legal affairs for *The Boston Globe*. His book, *Takeover: The Return of the Imperial Presidency and the Subversion of American Democracy*, has just been published by Little, Brown.

## While Cheney claimed that he and Bush were filling in a valley of executive power, they were actually building atop a mountain.

other things, the new rules required presidents to consult lawmakers before sending the armed forces into combat, and to bring troops home after 60 days if Congress did not explicitly authorize a longer fight. Congress also created an independent counsel who could investigate the White House without being fired by the president.

The erosion of these and other checks began even before the post-Watergate furor had fully subsided. As early as 1975, Gerald Ford, without consulting Congress, was sending marines on a bloody rescue mission to Cambodia; by 1999, Bill Clinton felt free to order the Air Force to bomb Kosovo and Serbia, which it did for 78 days—all without any explicit congressional authorization. After the Iran-Contra and Whitewater investigations, lawmakers let the independent-counsel law expire.

Administrations from both parties also continued to develop new powers. Jimmy Carter set the precedent for unilaterally scrapping a ratified treaty

did in Korea. He could not utter the magic words *state secrets* or *executive privilege* to nullify lawsuits and evade congressional oversight—both of these precedents were set during Dwight Eisenhower's administration. By exploiting the sense of permanent crisis that surrounded the early Cold War, presidents of both parties cowed both Congress and the Supreme Court. Today, the war on terrorism has provided a similar rationale.

Most legal scholars believe that these changes to the structure of American democracy deviate from the vision of the Founders, who hated monarchies and had a pessimistic view of human nature. To reduce the damage that a bad leader could inflict, the Founders divided control over the government among three coequal powers so that each could check the others. Focused in particular on keeping the president from becoming an elected king, they gave Congress the power to make the big



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\*Orlando, effective October 30, 2007

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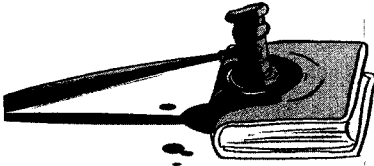
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# What to watch for in the weeks ahead Calendar

COMPILED BY MATTHEW QUIRK



## OCT **Thomas** **1** **Speaks Up**

For a \$1.5 million advance, Clarence Thomas, the most tight-lipped of Supreme Court justices (he spoke not a word in oral arguments from late February 2006 to May 2007), spills in a memoir due out today. Thomas will likely recuse himself from issues involving his publisher's parent company, News Corporation, and has indicated he'll restrict interviews to sympathetic venues like Fox News.

## OCT **Bank-** **19-21** **Scratching**

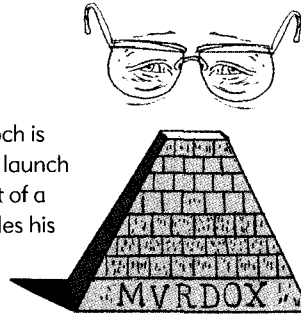
The U.S. and Europe usually choose the leaders of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, but perhaps no more: The IMF's executive board hopes to select a new director "without geographical preferences" by this weekend's annual meeting, a nod to the growing strength of developing economies.

## OCT **Bad Medicine?**

**8** Pfizer today seeks dismissal of a lawsuit in Nigeria that has fueled African fears of Western medicine. The pharmaceutical company has denied allegations that two antibiotics used to treat Nigerian children in the 1990s were the cause of 11 deaths and 189 cases of brain damage, paralysis, or other injury.

## OCT **Fox and Bonds**

**15** After conquering the tabloids, the networks, and cable news, Rupert Murdoch is turning to finance. Today, he'll launch the Fox Business Network, part of a growing juggernaut that includes his recent acquisition, *The Wall Street Journal*.



## OCT **Open Secrets**

**22** Valerie Plame, the CIA agent unmasked by Robert Novak in the run-up to the Iraq War, is set to publish her memoir today. She lost a legal battle to stop CIA censors, however, and won't be able to mention her dates of service. They had already been released to the public, but the CIA says that was an "administrative error," and they remain classified. (Psst! They're November 9, 1985, to January 9, 2006.)

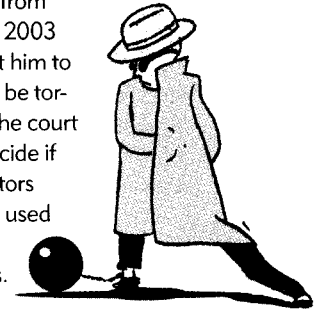


## OCT **Mr. November?**

**24** The World Series is scheduled to start on a Wednesday this year, when it's easier to win TV ratings, instead of a Saturday, as in the past. The late start would push a Game 7 into November for only the second time in baseball history (the 9/11 attacks delayed the series in 2001).

## OCT **All in the Family**

**28** In keeping with Peronist tradition, Argentine President Néstor Kirchner tapped his wife, Cristina, to run to be his successor in today's presidential election. Presidents are limited to two consecutive terms, but some believe the couple (often likened to the Clintons) will hold on to power by swapping places.



## OCT **iQuit!**

**31** If your soaps and sitcoms seem a bit poorly scripted, it may be because the TV Writers Guild's contract is set to expire today. To avoid the \$500 million in losses that accompanied the last writers' strike, in 1988, producers have pushed to get extra episodes in the can. New technology and revenue sources—"webisodes" and iPod reruns—have made negotiations nettlesome.

## ALSO IN OCTOBER

### **Tackling Darfur**

Now that Sudan has finally permitted UN troops to help quell the violence in Darfur, the really hard part begins. The UN peacekeeping mandate calls for up to 26,000 troops; African nations have pledged soldiers, but adequate logistics and support may be a problem. The first deployment of several hundred should arrive this month.

### **The Spanish Prisoners**

Twenty-eight suspects could face sentences of up to 40 years for the 2004 Madrid train bombings that killed 191 people.





# PRIMARY SOURCES

## HOMELAND SECURITY Money for Nothing

State governments are receiving homeland-security grants faster than they can spend them, according to the most recent figures from the Department of Homeland Security. Since 2002, the department has awarded \$16 billion, but so far states have picked up only \$11 billion; the remainder is sitting unspent in the nation's capital. Even attractive targets for terrorists, like the District of Columbia and New York state—both of which have complained about grant cuts—haven't been able to keep up

with the federal government's largesse; New York has spent only 52 percent of its grants, the District 62 percent. New Mexico has been the stingiest (or the most prudent, depending on your point of view), spending only half of its grants to date, while South Dakota has burned through 86 percent of the \$96.5 million earmarked to thwart threats in the Badlands. The states say that matching-fund requirements, bidding and contracting procedures, and back-ordered goods have kept much of the money on ice.

—"Agency Roll-up," Department of Homeland Security

## Burning a Hole in Their Pocket

Total homeland-security money allocated and percent not spent, by state

### Most Money Allocated ...

|            |                 |       |
|------------|-----------------|-------|
| California | \$1,609,729,984 | 34.8% |
| New York   | \$1,451,835,176 | 47.9% |
| Texas      | \$962,780,438   | 30.1% |
| Florida    | \$697,759,563   | 34.3% |
| Illinois   | \$686,090,209   | 31.6% |

### ... Versus Least Money Allocated

|              |              |       |
|--------------|--------------|-------|
| South Dakota | \$96,549,974 | 14.3% |
| North Dakota | \$92,039,799 | 15.7% |
| Delaware     | \$91,503,145 | 26.9% |
| Vermont      | \$90,966,144 | 19.6% |
| Wyoming      | \$79,829,261 | 16.2% |

## RELIGION

### Mrs. Pascal's Wager?

Does a fear of hellfire make women more religious than men? "Risk preference theory"—which holds that because females are more risk-averse than males, they are, for example, more likely to attend church as a hedge against the possibility of spending eternity in hell—is the latest attempt to explain the piety gap between men and women. (Other proposed hypotheses suggest that women traditionally have had more time to attend church and that they've seen religion as a source of affirmation in male-dominated societies.) Now a study by two researchers at the University of Arizona aims to dispel the hellfire argument, noting that it presupposes that speculation about the afterlife determines people's religiosity. Researchers studied people who believed in an afterlife and people who didn't, and found not only that women who don't believe in life after death are more religious than men who don't expect an afterlife, but that the gap between the sexes was larger among those who don't anticipate an eternal reward or punishment. Women who don't believe in the afterlife are nearly twice as likely as men with similar beliefs to view the Bible



as the literal word of God; women who do believe are only 1.27 times as likely to take the Bible literally. Similarly, women who don't believe in hell attend church more frequently than men who share their skepticism, but women who do believe in hell don't attend church much more often than their male counterparts.

—"Risky Business: Assessing Risk Preference Explanations for Gender Differences in Religiosity," Louise Marie Roth and Jeffrey C. Kroll, American Sociological Review

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Big Government, Small Results

Turns out Uncle Sam hasn't done that much to stop teens from drinking and driving. The official story goes that the 1984 Federal Uniform Drinking Age Act, which threatened to withhold federal funds from states that didn't raise their drinking age to 21, ended the glory days of teens driving to another state to get drunk and then careening home. According to federal estimates, pushing a uniform minimum drinking age nationwide saved 21,887 lives through 2002. New research argues that it wasn't so: By studying state-by-state data, the authors found that most of the reduction in fatalities came from states that had raised the drinking age before the federal law went on the books; in states that raised the drinking age to comply with the federal pressure, there was little effect. Furthermore, fatalities in states that raised the age early dipped only briefly; in the other states, they either remained steady or increased after the age was changed. The authors conclude that the overall reduction in traffic deaths has had more to do with safer cars and better medical treatment for accident victims than with policies handed down from on high.

—"Does the Minimum Legal Drinking Age Save Lives?" Jeffrey A. Miron, Elina Tetelbaum, National Bureau of Economic Research

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# ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT

## ENRICHING EVENTS FOR THE MIND

**Columbia: New York City**  
**The 35th Bampton Lectures in America: The Crusades**  
 October 9th, 10th, 16th, and 17th, 5-7 pm | [www.calendar.columbia.edu](http://www.calendar.columbia.edu)



Columbia guest lecturer, Jonathan Riley-Smith, Professor Emeritus of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge University, will convene an insightful intellectual discussion across four evenings. Dr. Riley-Smith will bring his seasoned perspective to the topic of "The Crusades, Christianity and

Islam," focusing on differing themes of a compelling history that continues to prove its relevance in the contemporary day.

**California Institute of Technology: Pasadena**  
**Vicente Fox: Revolution of Hope; the Life, Faith and Dreams of a Mexican President**  
 October 16th, 8:00 pm | [www.events.caltech.edu](http://www.events.caltech.edu)

Attendees of this free public event will join Mexico's prominent former president, Vicente Fox, as he reads from and signs his new book. President Fox, a dynamic force in bringing his nation onto the world stage, speaks out in *Revolution of Hope* on global topics such as immigration, the war in Iraq, globalization, the role of the United Nations, free trade, indigenous rights and the moral imperative to heal the divide between rich and poor nations.

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Cambridge**  
**Physics Colloquia Series Presents**  
**Nobel Prize Winner Steve Chu**  
 October 4th, 5:00 pm | [www.web.mit.edu/physics](http://www.web.mit.edu/physics)

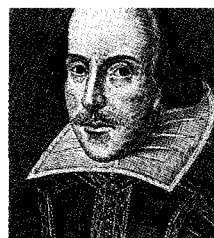
As part of the 2007 Colloquia series, the MIT Department of Physics presents Steve Chu, director of the Lawrence Berkeley Lab. Dr. Chu, a 1997 Nobel Prize winner, has drawn attention for his commitment to the role of science researchers in developing technologies to reverse climate change, partnering with the oil industry to develop biofuels and solar energy programs and making the Berkeley labs a leader in the global push for alternative fuel solutions.

**University of North Carolina: Chapel Hill**  
**Harry Belafonte: "The Importance of the Arts in America"**  
 September 24th, 7 pm | [www.events.unc.edu](http://www.events.unc.edu)

Harry Belafonte, National Medal of Arts and Grammy Lifetime Achievement winner and the University of North Carolina 2007 Frey Foundation Distinguished Visiting Professor, will share his reflections on the arts in America, formed by the experiences of a remarkable life. This extraordinary evening with Mr. Belafonte—a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and a veteran of the civil rights and anti-apartheid movements as well as an acclaimed musician and actor—will be presented by the UNC College of Arts and Sciences and Carolina Performing Arts.



**Boston College: Boston**  
**Shakespeare and the Cause of English Catholicism**



October 4th, 4:30 pm | [www.bc.edu/publications/relarts/](http://www.bc.edu/publications/relarts/)

The Boston College interdisciplinary journal *Religion and the Arts* hosts author Clare Asquith, whose provocative ideas on Shakespeare's religious context are now at the heart of current debate about Shakespeare's Catholic orientation.

Asquith's widely reviewed 2005 book *Shadowplay: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare* (2005) made the controversial argument for the presence of hidden Catholic codes in the Bard's writings.

**Michigan State University: East Lansing**  
**Unraveling the Mystery of an Emerging Disease**  
 September 18th, 7:30-8:45 pm | [www.events.msu.edu](http://www.events.msu.edu)

An installment of Michigan State's "Dessert with Discussion" series highlighting a wide range of environmental and ecological issues, this talk by Entomology Department Chair Dr. Richard Merritt will focus on the emergence of Buruli ulcers in Africa. Guests of the lecture will be treated to both a learning experience on the highly relevant theme of public health in developing nations and to Rwanda coffee, tea and desserts.

**Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and the New Jersey Historical Society: Newark**  
**The Long Hot Summers in Retrospect: Urban Unrest in 1960s New Jersey**  
 October 6th, 12:00 pm | [www.ethnicity.rutgers.edu](http://www.ethnicity.rutgers.edu)

The New Jersey Historical Society and The Rutgers University Institute for Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience will host this one-day conference of conversation and intellectual exchange about social upheaval in 1960s New Jersey. Conference attendees and participants will join in a dialogue featuring a multitude of perspectives on the unrest in Newark in 1967—and the conditions and tensions that precipitated it—within a national and an historical context.



**State University of New York: Stony Brook**  
**Sharks in Perspective: Predators, Prey, and Art History**

September 18, 4:00 pm | [www.stonybrook.edu/sb](http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb)

In this unconventional interdisciplinary lecture, Vincent Gallucci, Professor of Ocean and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington, will discuss the oft-misunderstood subject of sharks. Gallucci, a member of The World Conservation Union Shark Specialist Group, will use multiple lenses to analyze the place of sharks in their ecosystems and in popular imagination.

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## IMMIGRATION

### Random Justice

If you're a Chinese refugee seeking asylum in the United States, what's your best bet? First, move to San Francisco. Then try to find an immigration lawyer, prove that a dependent is counting on you, and pray for a female judge. According to a recent study by three law professors, factors like ethnicity, geography, and the gender of the judge—along with a healthy dose of luck—play a far bigger role than the merits of the case in determining whether a refugee is granted asylum in the United States. The authors analyzed hundreds of thousands of cases and found a huge geographic variance in the rates at which applicants prevailed. In 2005, for instance, the Houston field office granted asylum to only 17 percent of applicants; the Arlington, Virginia, office approved 52 percent.

Between 2000 and 2005, 74 percent of Chinese refugees in San Francisco won asylum, whereas only 18 percent of their compatriots in Newark, New Jersey, did. Demographics may account for some of this variance, but they don't explain the discrepancies that the authors found in the judgments of officials in the same buildings: At the federal immigration court in Miami, one judge granted asylum to 88 percent of Colombian applicants, yet another ruled in favor of just 5 percent. The researchers also discovered that asylum seekers with lawyers were granted refuge far more often than those without, that those with dependents had slightly better odds, and that female judges granted asylum at a substantially higher rate than their male counterparts.

—"Refugee Roulette: Disparities in Asylum Adjudication," Jaya Ramji-Nogales, Andrew I. Schoenholtz, and Philip G. Schrag, *Stanford Law Review*



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## SOCIETY

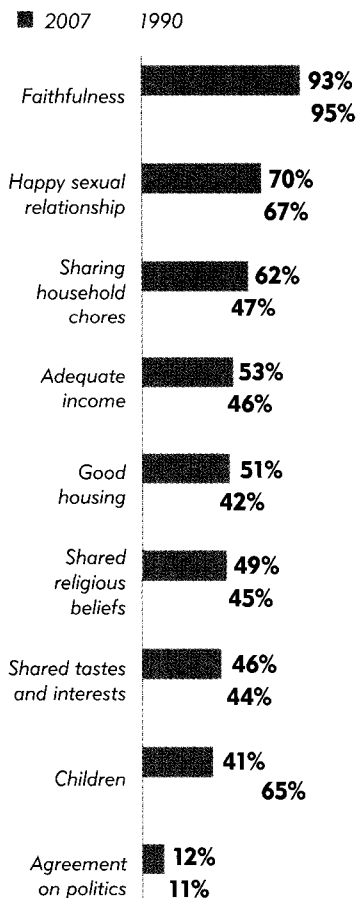
### Empty-Nesters, Unite!

The kids are, eh, all right. A new poll from the Pew Research Center shows that more people now consider adequate income and an equitable division of household labor more essential to a happy marriage than having children. Researchers asked more than 2,000 adults what they considered important for a successful union; having children ranked eighth out of nine choices, ahead of only "agreement on politics." Just 41 percent said that kids were "very important"—a plunge of 24 percentage points since the last such study, in 1990. ("Sharing household chores" shot up 15 percentage points over the same period, landing in third place.) The report attributes the shift in part to a change in moral thinking that has also led to greater social acceptance of cohabitation, premarital sex, and unwed childbearing. As a result, the authors say, "In the United States today, marriage exerts less influence over how adults organize their lives and how children are born and raised than at any time in the nation's history."

—"As Marriage and Parenthood Drift Apart, Public Is Concerned About Social Impact," *Pew Research Center*

### Fidelity, Yes; Kids, Maybe

Percent saying each is "very important" for a successful marriage



## PSYCHOLOGY

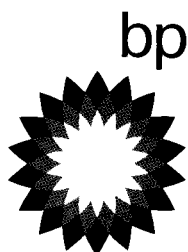
### Standing Tall

One hundred thirty-five years ago, Charles Darwin wondered whether pride led to good posture, or whether it was the other way around—that a ramrod back inspired self-confidence. A little of both, says a new study—but only for men. The authors asked participants to take a math test while sitting either slumped or upright; they found that men felt better about their performance on the test if they sat upright. Women, however, felt more confident about their performance if they slouched. The men who'd been sitting up straight went on to score better than their hunched counterparts; the women's scores showed no such disparity. The authors suggest that men rely more on internal cues when determining how they feel and that women rely more on external ones—an upright posture forces them to be more self-conscious, which previous studies have shown can hurt how well they do on math tests.

—"Not All Who Stand Tall Are Proud: Gender Differences in the Proprioceptive Effects of Upright Posture," Tomi-Ann Roberts and Yousef Arefi-Afshar, *Cognition and Emotion*

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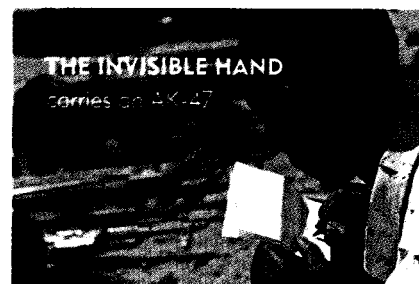


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## ARMAMENTS

### The Way of the Gun

Don't blame the collapse of the Soviet Union for the widespread popularity among arms dealers and insurgents of the AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifle, a new study on "weaponomics" advises. Blame the Soviets: Not only has the AK-47 been widely copied, but "large caches of these weapons were freely distributed to regimes and rebels sympathetic to the Soviet Union" well before its collapse. Drawing on field reports and journalistic accounts, the study claims to be the first effort to quantitatively document the market for small arms, which are responsible for between 200,000 and 400,000 deaths each year. The AK-47 merits particular attention because its "ease of operation, robustness to mistreatment and negligible failure rate" make it the weapon of choice for small armies and bands of marauders: Of the 500 million firearms estimated to be in the world today, some 100 million are Kalashnikovs. The study reports that assault rifles are on average at least \$200 cheaper in a typical African country than elsewhere, thanks to porous borders (as conflict moves across the continent, the arms freely follow). It also finds that the small-arms trade tends to be weaker in countries with high military spending, because a strong military makes it "imprudent for non-government entities to openly trade or parade about with large quantities of conflict-grade weapons." Most surprisingly, the study cites research suggesting that having more arms in the marketplace makes running a counter-insurgency easier, presumably because it tends to fragment rebel groups: "The more easily individual combatants can obtain weapons through independent suppliers," the author writes, "the more difficult it will be to mount and maintain a united and coordinated insurgency."

—"Weaponomics: The Global Market for Assault Rifles," Phillip Killicoat, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper

MARCO LONGARI/AFP/Getty Images

SPORTS

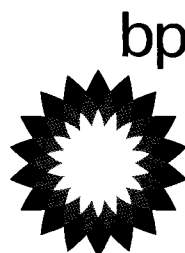
## Hoop Schemes

When NBA Commissioner David Stern acknowledged in July that referee Tim Donaghy may have gambled on games he officiated, Stern called him a "rogue, isolated criminal." But a paper by an undergraduate student in the Stanford Department of Economics suggests that Donaghy may not have been a rogue element after all—there's a distinct likelihood, the author argues, that NBA players (or coaches) are also betting on games. The author observes that conventional economic theory supports conflicting claims about pro basketball's betting market: On the one hand, that market displays a measure of inexplicable irrationality that typically would point to untoward business transactions (like insider trading); on the other hand, NBA players make so much money that the odds of their intentionally shaving points, and thus jeopardizing their careers, seem quite slim. Still, pro ballplayers may not be immune to the lures of the sports book, given the brevity of their careers, their willingness to put personal interest ahead of team success, and their drive to compete, which they share with gamblers. The author studied betting lines and game results from the previous 14 NBA seasons and then analyzed how scores tended to move in a game's last five minutes—to his mind, the period when it was easiest to cheat. He found that heavily favored teams failed to cover the spread often enough to suggest that some funny money may have crept into the market. He estimates that players or coaches on the take skew perhaps five games a season, adding that since "referees are no less principal characters in basketball games," future researchers might investigate whether there are more bad apples in the officiating ranks.

—"Point Shaving in the NBA: An Economic Analysis of the National Basketball Association's Point Spread Betting Market," Jonathan Gibbs, Stanford Department of Economics

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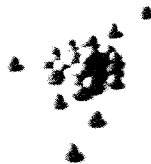


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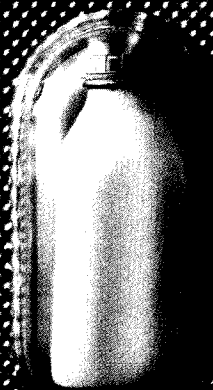
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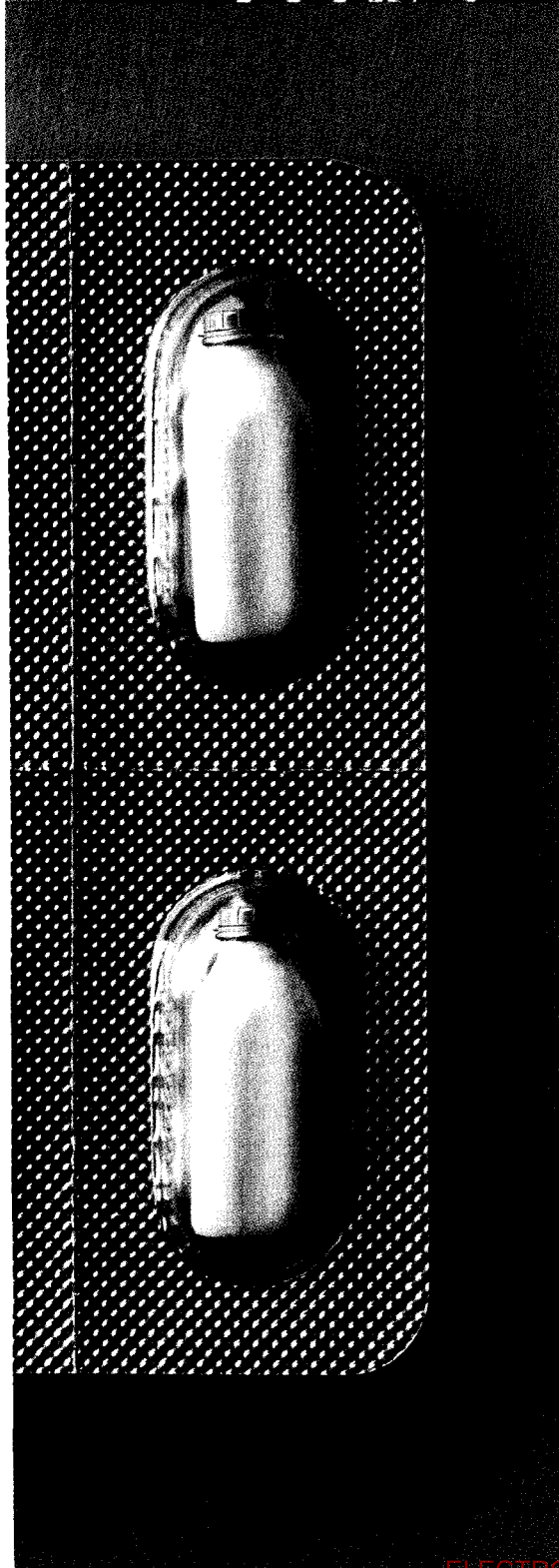
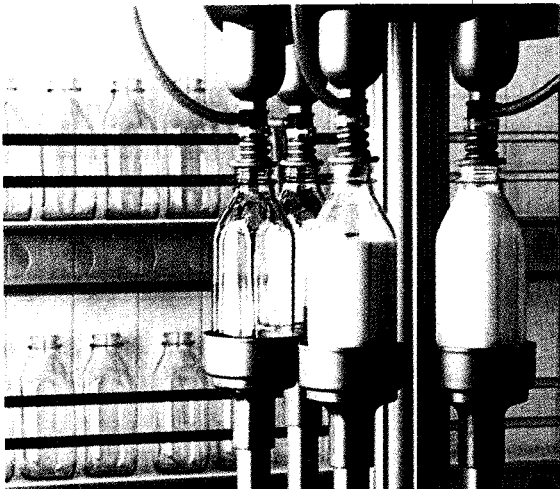


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### PERSONAL FINANCE

#### Better With (Middle) Age

Maybe it's time to rethink what we mean by the "golden years." As Americans get older, they tend to make better and better financial decisions—but only up to a point, a study finds, and then their hard-earned skills decline. Researchers from Harvard, Princeton, and the Federal Reserve—drawing on consumer financial data from 10 sources, including mortgages, credit cards, and car loans—observed an overall U-shaped pattern of financial mistakes, with the best performance occurring among people in their early 50s. On average, financial perspicuity peaks at 53, which the study designates the "age of reason." The age

of peak discernment when it comes to picking the best home-equity loan is 56; for a mortgage, it's 62, and for a car loan, it's 50. Both older and younger borrowers are more apt to make poor decisions that result in higher interest rates and fee payments. The researchers (all on the cusp of middle age themselves, incidentally) suggest that the financial acumen of 50-somethings demonstrates that experiential capital trumps the analytical capital that quick-thinking youngsters enjoy, but that it follows a pattern of diminishing returns as old age encroaches.

—"The Age of Reason: Financial Decisions Over the Lifecycle," Sumit Agarwal, John C. Driscoll, Xavier Gabaix, and David Laibson, MIT Department of Economics Working Paper



### IRAQ

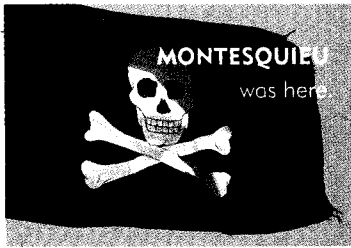
#### No Exit

The recent British experience in Basra offers a glimpse of what might happen in Baghdad after the current surge of U.S. troops recedes, according to a recent report from the International Crisis Group. The British aimed to "pave the way for a takeover by Iraqi forces" through a security plan dubbed Operation Sinbad, which was conducted between September 2006 and March 2007. The operation was "a qualified success," insofar as it drove down crime, assassinations, and sectarian killings and produced a "relative calm." But the calm proved "both superficial and fleeting," giving way to renewed violence that has left the British hunkered down inside their compounds. This intra-Shiite strife, the report suggests, in a city far from Iraq's major Sunni-Shia fault lines, is more

evidence that the lack of a functioning state is as much to blame for the chaos as sectarian rivalry and antipathy toward coalition troops. In the absence of dependable state institutions or local leaders, the withdrawal of coalition troops risks creating further instability. Power in Basra increasingly lies in the hands of militias entangled with incompetent police forces and political parties, the authors note, and local leaders often resolve conflicts outside of official institutions, undermining the judiciary and its role in mediating disputes. As Congress and the White House consider options for Baghdad and the rest of the country, the report urges them to recognize that "their so-called Iraqi partners, far from building a new state, are tirelessly working to tear it down."

—"Where Is Iraq Heading? Lessons From Basra," International Crisis Group





## HISTORY

### Democrats of the Caribbean

In the 18th century, Britain's Royal Navy may have been defined by rum, sodomy, and the lash, but the sailors often thought that there was too little rum and way too much lash. According to a study by a George Mason University economist, the navy's cruelty and authoritarianism drove sailors to join pirate ships—by 1716, the pirate population was one-fifth that of the British navy. The pirates devised a separation-of-powers system to ensure that their new captains treated them better. They elected a quarter-master from within their ranks to mete out provisions and booty, and captains got only an equal share. Common sailors could barge into a captain's quarters, "swear at him, seize a part of his Victuals and Drink." Only in battle did pirate captains wield total authority, allowing their crews to profit from the quick decisions a unitary executive could provide. The sailors, before setting out, would agree on guidelines—known as the "Custom of the Coast" or "Jamaica Discipline"—for settling disputes, doling out punishment, and deciding living arrangements. (Some ships even had strict no-smoking policies.) The author notes that the separation of powers on pirate ships slightly predates England's 1688 Glorious Revolution, and he suggests that the American system of checks and balances appears to have a little Captain Morgan in it.

—"An-arrgh-chy: The Law and Economics of a Pirate Organization," Peter T. Leeson, George Mason University

For links to the documents discussed in this section, visit [www.theatlantic.com/doc/200710/primarysources](http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200710/primarysources).

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POLL

## GUANTÁNAMO'S SHADOW

The Atlantic recently asked a group of foreign-policy authorities about the U.S. detention center at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

**Q.** Has the prison system at Guantánamo Bay helped or hurt the United States in its fight against al-Qaeda?

### 87% Hurt

"Nothing has hurt America's image and standing in the world—and nothing has undermined the global effort to combat nihilistic terrorism—[more] than the brutal torture and dehumanizing actions of Americans in Abu Ghraib and in other prisons (secret or otherwise). America can win the fight against terrorism only if it acts in ways consistent with the values for which it stands."

"I speak as a Republican, so this is not a partisan comment: The Founders would be rightly ashamed of us. We have forgotten, as Truman and Eisenhower never did, that America's power is as much about what it stands for as its hard-power characteristics. This has all been put in the worst kind of peril by Gitmo."

"The controversies that have surrounded the system have outweighed any benefit. The main reason for locating the facility at Guantánamo—to attempt to keep it out of the reach of anyone's legal system—was never justifiable."

"We have abandoned the moral high ground and, through our actions, have become one of the principal recruiting agents for Islamic extremism."

"Our strongest asset internationally was our reputation and credibility on human rights. We've squandered that."

### 13% Helped

"The main purposes of Gitmo detention are (1) to allow effective interrogation to provide intelligence for the war on terrorism and (2) to keep dangerous [terrorists] locked up. Gitmo ... has achieved both purposes. The administration has not done a good job of explaining to the public what it was doing at Gitmo or why—and that has caused some unnecessary problems. But interrogating captured terrorists—and keeping them detained and off the battlefield—is undeniably important to our security."

"It has helped immeasurably with actionable intelligence."

**Q.** What should the U.S. do with the remaining detainees at Guantánamo?

### 53% Try them in a civil or an international court

"The military tribunals have no international credibility. And we must have some legal resolution to this mess."

"If we have evidence on them, we have nothing to fear—and a lot to gain—by holding proper trials. They will show our 'bona fides' to the world, which now are badly tarnished."

"The sooner we demonstrate that we are a nation of laws, the better."

### 37% Process each one through the military tribunal system

"To give them access to civil courts would be to succumb to what al-Qaeda calls its strategy of 'lawfare.' As the 9/11 report explained, giving the 'blind sheik' [Omar Abdel Rahman] and his accomplices access to the civil courts was a significant element in the success of the second attack on the World Trade Center."

"Process them through the military tribunal system, but ensure it accords the detainees due process."

### 10% Release them to their home countries

"This is the right course, but it is easier said than done. Some countries don't want their nationals back; they represent nothing but trouble ... Working out [reliable] arrangements [with other countries to ensure rehabilitation, monitoring, or continued confinement] is harder than most critics know or would acknowledge."

**PARTICIPANTS (41):** Kenneth Adelman, Graham Allison, Ronald Asmus, Samuel Berger, Stephen Bosworth, Daniel Byman, Warren Christopher, Wesley Clark, Richard Clarke, Ivo Daalder, James Dobbins, Douglas Feith, Leslie Gelb, Marc Grossman, John Hamre, Gary Hart, Bruce Hoffman, Laura Holgate, John Hulsman, Robert Hunter, Tony Judt, Robert Kagan, David Kay, Andrew Krepinovich, Charles Kupchan, John Lehman, James Lindsay, Edward Luttwak, John McLaughlin, Richard Myers, William Nash, Joseph Nye, Carlos Pascual, Paul Pillar, Kenneth Pollack, Joseph Ralston, Susan Rice, Wendy Sherman, Anne-Marie Slaughter, James Steinberg, Anthony Zinni.

REUTERS/DOD/LANDOV





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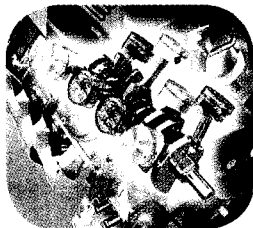
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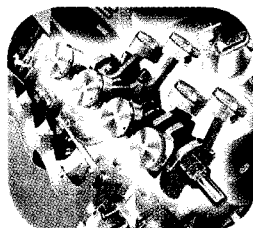
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## THE WORLD IN NUMBERS

The world's most essential oil field may be in decline.

# Running Dry?

BY JAMES D. HAMILTON

No country is more important to oil markets than Saudi Arabia. The kingdom produced roughly 9.2 million barrels of crude a day in 2006, and accounted for 19 percent of world oil exports. Many analysts expect it to supply a quarter of the world's added production over the next few years. And as the only producer with significant excess capacity, it has played a crucial role in alleviating temporary supply disruptions, increasing daily production by 3.1 million barrels during the first Gulf War, for example, when oil production in Iraq and Kuwait dropped by 5.3 million barrels.

The Ghawar oil field is the kingdom's crown jewel. Stretching for more than 150 miles beneath the desert, it is the largest known deposit in the world. It produces perhaps twice as much oil as any other field, and has doubtless accounted for more than half of Saudi Arabia's oil production. Yet the Saudis have been removing oil from this reservoir for half a century. Sooner or later, its production must fall.

The Saudis do not release data on how much oil they are extracting from individual wells, or on the remaining reserves of individual oil fields. But the total amount that the kingdom produces has been declining, down a million barrels a day over the last two years of data.

The Saudis have claimed these cuts have been in response to weak demand. However, the big drop in production began in the spring of 2006, when the price of oil was rising from \$60 to \$74 a barrel; the claim that no one wanted to buy Saudi Arabia's light crude strains credulity. The drop in production has also coincided with a huge new Saudi

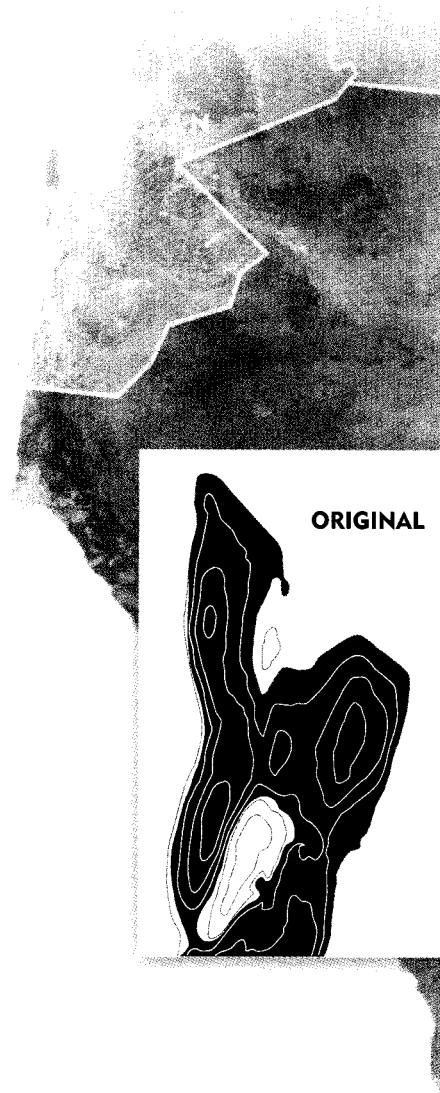
effort to find and pump more oil: The number of active oil rigs in Saudi Arabia has tripled over the past three years.

Frustrated by the lack of hard data on Ghawar, Stuart Staniford, a computer scientist with a doctorate in physics, has conducted a painstaking study of publicly available information. His research has been reported at theoil drum.com, a Web site that analyzes energy markets.

The Saudis have developed Ghawar by using peripheral water injection—water is pumped into the reservoir, driving the remaining oil to the surface. More details about Saudi production were available before 1980, allowing Staniford to infer that the depth of the remaining oil column in northern Ghawar at that time was about 500 feet. Evidence from many sources suggests that the water level has been rising at about 18.4 feet per year. If you extrapolate that trend, this would mean that the northern part of Ghawar is by now quite depleted.

Staniford has also built a detailed computer simulation of the Ghawar reservoir, based on its size and shape, the porosity and permeability of its rock, and the assumed oil-extraction rates. The results of this simulation line up remarkably well with Staniford's other calculations. Oil production from northern Ghawar has likely peaked.

Southern Ghawar still holds a lot of oil, and perhaps the kingdom's push to find new fields will bear fruit. But northern Ghawar was developed first because it was by far the most promising field. Its production cannot be easily replaced. At about the same time that Saudi production began its decline, the new Haradh project in southern Ghawar began producing perhaps an additional 300,000 barrels a day. The Saudis have also made

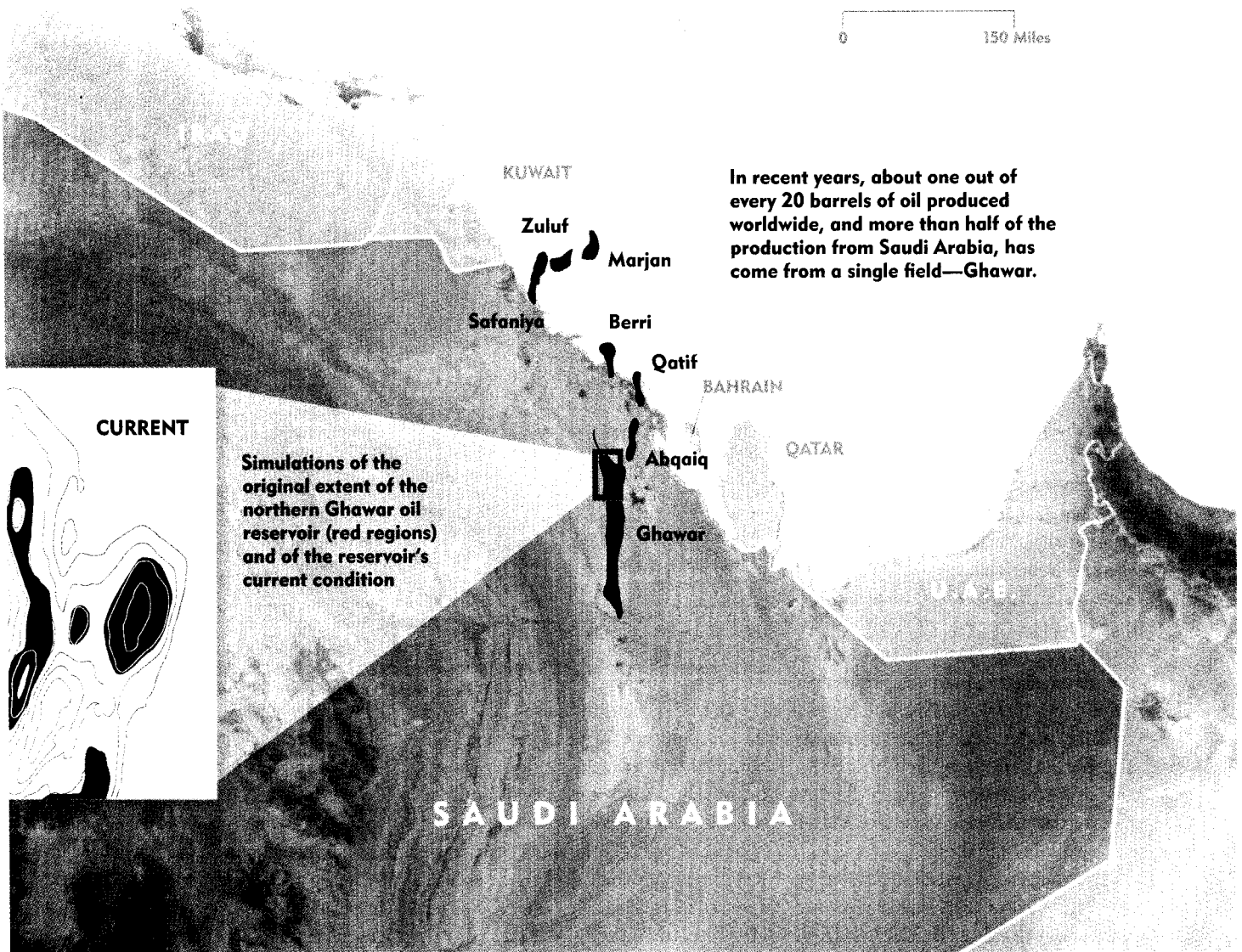


a huge investment to reopen the Qatif field on the eastern coast, which they had abandoned in 1995; it is now producing an estimated half-million barrels a day. With Saudi production falling despite these new contributions, the situation could be serious.

At a bare minimum, the era when excess Saudi capacity could cushion geopolitical disruptions in oil supplies may well be over, even though the threat of such disruptions is greater than ever. And if Saudi production continues to decline even as world demand keeps growing, in a few years we will look back at the summer of 2007 as the last of the days when gasoline—even at \$3.50 a gallon—was still plentiful and cheap. ▀

James D. Hamilton is a professor of economics at the University of California, San Diego; his analysis appears regularly at [www.econbrowser.com](http://www.econbrowser.com).

SOURCES: ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION; BAKER HUGHES. GRAPHICS BY EVAN MORRIS. SIMULATION ADAPTED FROM ANALYSIS BY STUART STANIFORD

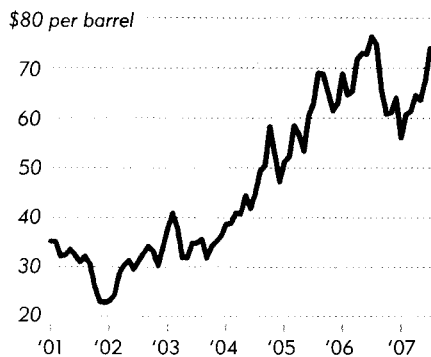


Saudi Arabia often has increased its oil production in response to rising prices. But in recent years, despite high prices, production first plateaued, then declined.

Saudi investment in finding and pumping oil has increased rapidly.

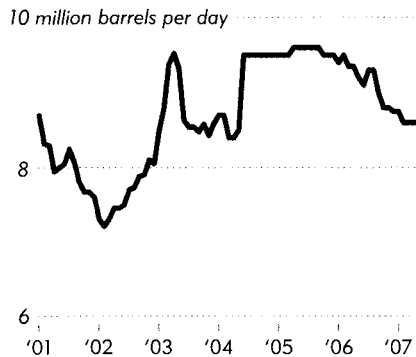
#### PRICE OF OIL\*

Monthly (January '01 to July '07)



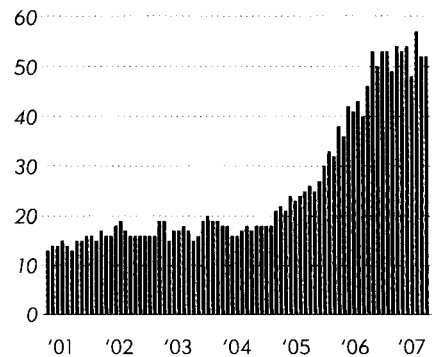
#### SAUDI CRUDE-OIL PRODUCTION

Monthly (January '01 to May '07)



#### SAUDI OIL-RIG COUNT

Monthly (January '01 to July '07)



\*Price of West Texas intermediate crude, at Cushing, Okla. (inflation-adjusted dollars)

(2003 production spike coincided with American invasion of Iraq)



## FIRST PRINCIPLES

Some economists are beginning to doubt the benefits of free trade. What's wrong with them?

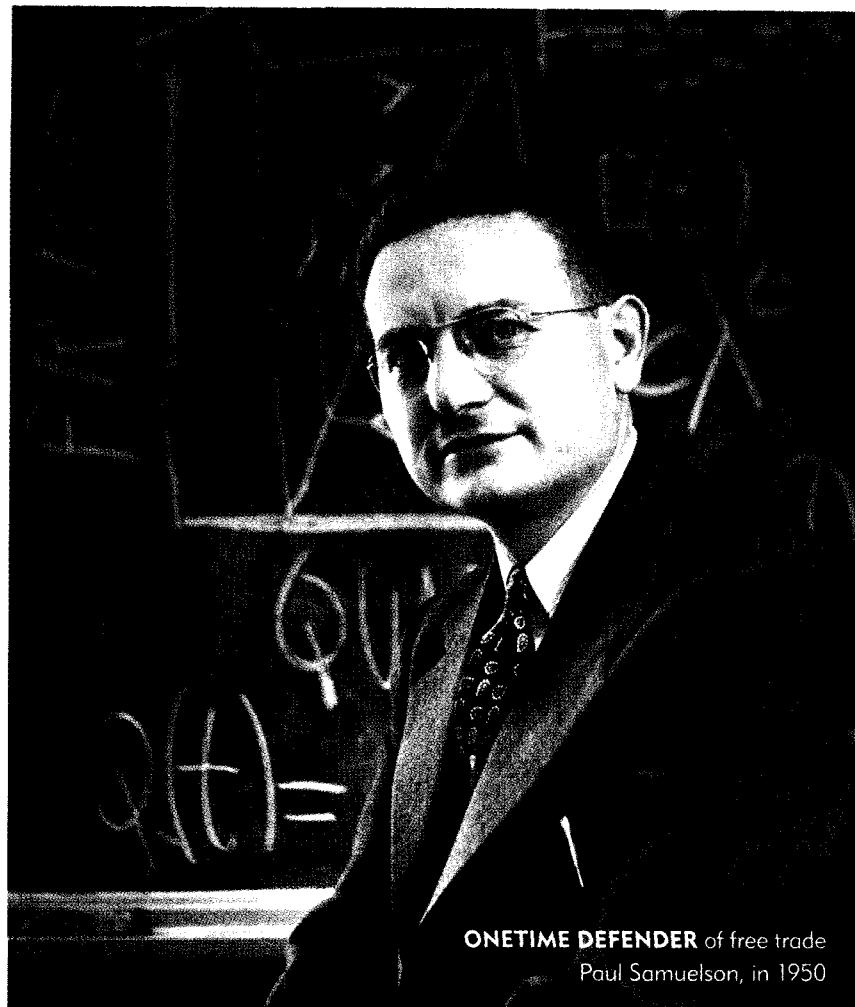
# Beyond Belief

BY CLIVE CROOK

Paul Samuelson, an undisputed titan of 20th-century economics, was once challenged by the mathematician Stanislaw Ulam to name a single proposition in all social science that was both true and nontrivial. It took a while, but Samuelson finally thought of a good answer: the principle of comparative advantage. This classical theory was true, Samuelson explained, as a matter of mathematical deduction, and its nontriviality was “attested by the thousands of important and intelligent men who have never been able to grasp the doctrine for themselves or to believe it after it was explained to them.”

The doctrine in question, devised by David Ricardo in 1817, makes a strong claim about the gains that accrue from trade. It would be difficult to exaggerate the centrality of the idea in modern economics. For nearly 200 years, the principle of comparative advantage, and the ideas about economic policy that flowed from it, divided the world into two camps: those with basic economic literacy, and the rest. Understanding this idea, and advocating it to the world, was part of what it meant to be an economist—especially an American economist.

Lately things have changed. Some of America's most eminent economists, including Samuelson himself, have edged away from that earlier consensus. Their support for liberal trade is far more tepid and tentative than before. The shift is both momentous and disturbing. Just why it happened is a mystery.



ONETIME DEFENDER of free trade  
Paul Samuelson, in 1950

To understand this issue, one must first understand what the principle of comparative advantage does *not* say. Intuitively, trade between two countries will make both better off so long as each is especially good at making something different from the other. They should specialize and trade to maximize this absolute advantage—as Adam Smith had earlier advocated in *The Wealth of Nations*. Ricardo's idea was subtler—and remarkable. He showed that there are mutual gains from trade even when one country is better at producing everything. All that matters is that its margin of superior efficiency is greater for some products than for others. The two countries should still specialize, even on the basis of this *comparative* advantage—if England is slightly worse than France at making wool, and much worse at making wine, it should specialize in wool and trade. However unproductive a country may be, even if it is uncompetitive across the board, it gains from trade.

The proof is a few lines of math, as anyone with an hour or two's training in economics will know. Nearly everybody else, as Samuelson said, finds the idea

difficult to believe. People sometimes think they believe it when they don't. The term *comparative advantage* is widely used, to be sure, but *absolute advantage* is what the politician or pundit usually has in mind. If I may speak for those with an hour or two's training, we used to find this confusion quite gratifying. “What happens if a country has no comparative advantage in anything?” people would ask, gravely. How we laughed.

Ricardo's theory did not cover every circumstance. Exceptions to its general rule (potential benefits from protecting “infant industries,” for instance) were recognized long ago. Nor did the theory claim that everyone gains; only that gains exceed losses. Nonetheless, the idea and the literature that grew up around it created a strong presumption that free trade was best. Exceptions were narrow and often exotic. The case for liberal trade commanded close to universal agreement among America's leading economists.

Astonishingly, Samuelson himself struck the heaviest new blow against the discipline's confidence on the issue. In 2004, aged 89, he roused himself to a burst of indignation, in the pages of

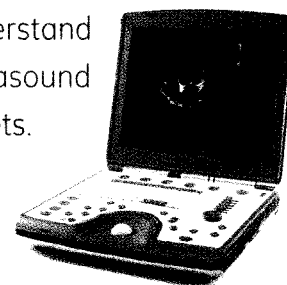




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the American Economic Association's *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, at conventional defenses of globalization. They were simplistic, he later told *The New York Times*. Under certain circumstances, he pointed out, the losses from trade could exceed the benefits, not just for particular industries but for the economy as a whole. *BusinessWeek* said Samuelson and others were "beginning to question the basic tenets of free-trade theory ... Is it possible that David Ricardo's economic analysis doesn't work for the 21st century?" Trade skeptics were exultant. Vindication from on high!

Since then, mainstream economists' disenchantment with the old near-certainties has continued to build, and at a gathering rate. Top-tier orthodox economists such as William Baumol, Alan Blinder, Paul Krugman, and Brad DeLong—invariably prefacing the point with the words "Although I'm no protectionist"—have expressed new fears about what imports and offshoring are doing

to living standards. Lawrence Summers, Bill Clinton's treasury secretary from 1999 to 2001 (and before that a revered mainstream scholar), is the most surprising new doubter. In a July *Financial Times* forum, he wrote, "It is not even altogether clear that [globalization] benefits America in aggregate."

Why has this happened? What has changed? I wish I could tell you. No new theoretical insight has emerged to challenge the old pro-trade presumption. Samuelson's 2004 article was mistaken for that in some quarters, but was actually a muddled combination of erroneous new theory on offshoring and uncontested old theory about monopoly power in global markets. The novel part was conclusively rubbished by Columbia's Arvind Panagariya, who showed that Samuelson had got his offshoring model plain wrong. So far, anyway, nobody has explained why offshoring needs a new theory; it is just another kind of trade. The old part—the idea that the United States might see its

income fall if trade drives down the prices of its exports—was already encompassed by the earlier consensus.

Jagdish Bhagwati, a preeminent trade scholar, also of Columbia, helped to theorize this danger in the 1950s. As he explained, "immiserizing" trade can arise only under quite unusual circumstances. The principal benefit to a country from openness to trade is cheaper imports. In the ordinary case, additional imports may put some domestic producers out of business, but the displaced capital and labor get applied to more efficient new uses, so the economy as a whole still gains. Suppose, however, that the country had previously been collecting some monopoly profits on its exports. If new trade drives up its production of those goods, their price might fall—and in theory, they could fall by enough to outweigh the gains from cheaper imports. In practical terms, this is an unimportant exception. Bhagwati himself remains a trenchant defender of liberal trade.



# essent

“When the facts change, I change my mind,” said John Maynard Keynes. “What do you do, sir?” Theory aside, the past decade has supplied a lot of new facts—not least, rising inequality and a protracted stagnation of middle-class earnings. It seems natural to blame the quickening pace of globalization for this. Again, however, no careful examination of the new facts on earnings shows trade or offshoring to be more than minor culprits. When you look closely, the shifts in earnings and the shifts in trade fail to marry up: The periods when imports have risen most rapidly are not the periods when wage pressures have been most intense. Studies suggest that labor-saving technology is a much more powerful force. No empirical work even comes close to supporting the claim that globalization is failing to benefit America in the aggregate. Countless studies have shown, and continue to show, the benefits of trade. Yes, some industries have shrunk or disappeared because of trade,

and their workers have suffered the consequences; the pace of this change has probably quickened lately; better policies to insure and compensate the victims are surely called for. But to say this is very different from supposing that open markets hurt the United States as a whole.

The new trade doubters, as their disclaimers insist, are not yet trade-policy revisionists. For the moment they would mostly agree that a presumption in favor of open markets is best—but a weaker presumption than before, to be expressed more tentatively. Militant support for free trade, they seem to feel, will offend opinion at a time when so many are experiencing economic stress. The way to maintain open markets is a softer sell—one that acknowledges, and even seems to validate, popular fears that trade is to blame. But this posture is surely unwise. The doubters are influential, especially in Democratic politics, and their seeming conversion is itself altering the political climate. Would the campaign positions

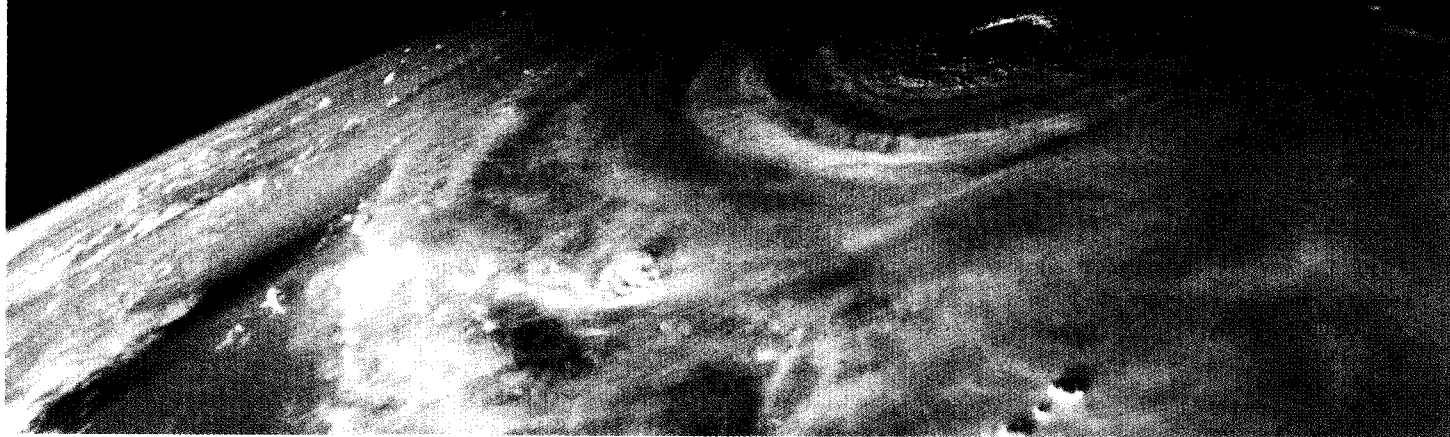
of the leading Democratic contenders for the presidency—so different from Bill Clinton’s position on the issue—be so hostile to trade otherwise? Ideas do matter, and for the first time, America’s leading orthodox economists are failing to speak with one voice in defense of liberal trade.

Samuelson once regarded the principle of comparative advantage—the modern theory of the gains from trade—as nontrivial. I would go a little further and say it was the greatest gift that economic wisdom ever bestowed on humankind. In a way that Samuelson did not envisage, the doubts that he and others have expressed threaten to make that idea trivial after all—dismissed as nothing more than an arresting curiosity, apt to be oversimplified by blinkered pro-trade types, with no real policy content and no claim on politicians’ attention. What a tragedy that would be. And not just because economics would no longer have an answer to Stanislaw Ulam’s question. ▀

Clive Crook is an Atlantic senior editor.

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## SCIENCE

Can meteorologists armed with supercomputers and a few tons of soot stop a hurricane from reaching the Gulf Coast? Can they stop it without getting sued?

# Riders on the Storm

BY GRAEME WOOD

Most of the hurricanes that strike the United States are born off the coast of West Africa, and nursed on tropical waters. As air warmed over the Atlantic surges up to meet the cool atmosphere, its heat turns into kinetic energy, creating a violent twist of wind and rain. The bigger the temperature difference between the hot sea and the cold upper air, the more furious the storm can grow.

Climate scientists, aided by ever-more-powerful computer models, are investigating whether it's possible to choke these storms slowly, during their long drift west. They want to attack big hurricanes from above or below, sapping the storms' strength by either heating up their chilly tops or chilling their hot underbellies. According to some models, well-timed interventions could diminish a hurricane by 40 percent—enough to turn a possible Category 5 storm into a mere Category 2 or 3, which would break windows and wreck trailer parks but leave most buildings intact.

An atmospheric-science team from Israel and Colorado, led by Daniel

Rosenfeld, has proposed seeding a hurricane's lower reaches with tiny particles, such as microscopic bits of salt. According to Bill Woodley, one of the team members, the storm's water vapor would condense on the particles, forming droplets too small to fall to Earth's surface as rain. Instead, the droplets would remain suspended, rise, and eventually evaporate, thereby cooling the hot air, just as wet skin is cooled in the breeze.

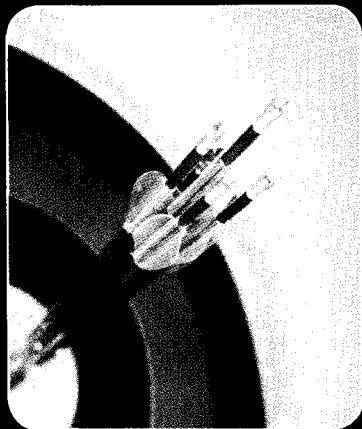
Meanwhile, a Boston-based team aims to attack a hurricane's cold ceiling. Ross Hoffman and Moshe Alamaro, this team's leaders, want to disperse tons of a special kind of soot as high as 50,000 feet—essentially spray-painting the top of the hurricane black, so the heat of the sun can warm the storm's upper layer, just as sunshine warms a black-roofed house. (This approach has obvious ecological drawbacks.)

Both teams of researchers would dump their particles out of large cargo planes, some of which can carry 125 tons or more. In Hoffman and Alamaro's scenario, the planes would disgorge the soot

above the hurricane's eye and the storm would disperse it outward. In the other group's plan, planes would disperse the salt particles at the storm's outer edges, to be hoovered up by the storm's churn and delivered to its heart. In both cases, the immediate impact on the hurricane's intensity would probably be negligible, but the effect would compound over time as the storm drifted west. All told, it might take a dozen or so flights a day to set in motion the degradation of a big storm.

That's the theory. In practice, previous efforts to subdue the weather have proven humbling. Hopes for cloud seeding once ran so high that Congress considered literally legislating the weather: The Weather Modification Act of 1951, had it passed, would have aimed for "equitable distribution of precipitation among the states." Some 50 years later, we can barely make rain: Seeding clouds with silver iodide can increase rainfall by as much as 20 percent, but only under narrow conditions. Airports clear out fog by seeding it and making it fall to the ground as snow, but that works only in extreme cold.

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As for mitigating hurricanes, the U.S. government sponsored research and experimentation through much of the mid-20th century—Project Stormfury and Project Cirrus were the largest efforts—to little, if any, practical effect.

Many meteorologists scoff at the new anti-hurricane efforts, but the idea's advocates, including a number of highly distinguished atmospheric scientists, are not daunted. They point out that their own promises are relatively modest: Rather than trying to change the weather decisively at a precise location—squeezing rain from blue skies, say, in South Texas—they're just trying to nudge existing storms slightly, in ways that are then slowly reinforced and magnified by the

that if his team tampers with a storm and pushes it even a dozen miles off its natural course, the storm could destroy towns that otherwise might not have been hit—and his team could end up drowned in civil suits, even if it's made the storm weaker, or pushed it away from a major city.

"There will never be large-scale weather modification in America," says Charles Hosler, a weather-modification pioneer. "All weather is good or bad for somebody, and when it's bad, that somebody's going to sue." (Hosler would know: He and his colleagues once successfully fought a suit by a tourist who had broken his leg after leaping out of a ski lift that had been struck by lightning. Hosler's

headaches. In one early experiment, Hosler says, lawyers for General Electric (which was part of Project Cirrus at the time) counseled the company to keep silent about its cloud-seeding activities, after a storm with which it had been tinkering swerved and battered South Carolina. Fidel Castro later accused American scientists working on Project Stormfury of using hurricanes as a counterrevolutionary instrument of war.

In both cases, the experiments almost certainly did nothing to alter any hurricane's course—their methods, science now shows, were likely hopeless. But that's scant comfort to hurricane researchers today, some of whom may seek legal protection before field-testing their ideas. In a 2006 paper, for example, Alamaro and two collaborators proposed treaties that would eliminate civil liabilities for hurricane modifiers and guarantee compensation for hurricane victims.

Ultimately, whether lawmakers expand protections and financial support for weather modifiers will likely depend on the weather. "If there were another hurricane like Katrina," says Alamaro, "the legislature might initiate laws to help with these issues." Some evidence suggests that hurricanes in the North Atlantic have recently been increasing in strength and frequency, and historically, bad hurricane seasons have sometimes meant more money and support for hurricane-killers. "When people get themselves pounded into oblivion," says Woodley, "they start talking to their representatives." New approaches become more appealing.

Even hurricane-modification advocates admit their cause is risky and expensive. But the defensive crouch that we're in now is expensive, too, and is hardly guaranteed to work: The Army Corps of Engineers has estimated it may need more than \$2.5 billion—several times what the hurricane modifiers think they'd need over the next decade—to buttress New Orleans against the next Katrina-level storm. Perhaps in this case it really would be better to fight them over seas, so we don't have to fight them at home. ▀

Graeme Wood is an Atlantic staff editor.

## Well-timed interventions could turn a possible Category 5 storm into a Category 2 or 3.

storms' own internal dynamics. And while newly realistic supercomputer simulations have inspired much of their confidence, so has empirical observation: We know that tiny particles of pollution trap water and cool clouds over cities; through the same mechanism, particles of salt would cool and weaken hurricanes. Likewise, when dust blows into a brewing hurricane, the hurricane tends to diminish. Last year, some scientists suspect, the East Coast was spared a severe hurricane season partly because West Africa spewed out an unusually large amount of dust, which traps water in the same way.

Still, few scientists believe these new ideas will be tried outside the computer lab anytime soon. The problem isn't the science. It's the lawyers. Modifying hurricanes entails big risks: Changing a hurricane's environment is likely to also change its path. Indeed, some hurricane researchers, including Hoffman and Alamaro, hope that their interventions will allow them to steer storms away from population centers in addition to diminishing them. But Hoffman says he fears

group had been studying thunderstorms nearby, and the tourist claimed the scientists were responsible for the strike.)

American courts have been ruling on weather modification since at least the late 1800s, when a judge decided that a preacher who had prayed for rain wasn't liable for the thunderbolt that razed his neighbor's barn in the ensuing storm. (The preacher had prayed only for rain, said the court, not for lightning.) In the mid-1960s, farmers in Pennsylvania sued after fruit growers in the region had called in a cloud seeder to suppress hail over their orchards. (The fruit growers were accused of playing God and causing a drought.) The difficulty of proving causation saved the defendants in court, as it usually does in suits involving weather modification. But the courts have suggested that farmers might have a right to what legal analysts have called the "rivers flowing through [their] skies," just as they have a right to the water under their fields. Stealing clouds could be legally analogous to diverting a stream.

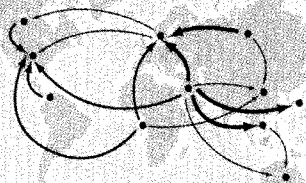
Past attempts to mitigate hurricanes have resulted in both legal and diplomatic



# There are 193 countries in the world. None of them are energy independent.

So who's holding whom over a barrel?

## Global Oil Flows



Source: Energy Information Administration

The fact is, the vast majority of countries rely on the few energy-producing nations that won the geological lottery, blessing them with abundant hydrocarbons. And yet, even regions with plenty of raw resources import some form of energy. Saudi Arabia, for example, the world's largest oil exporter, imports refined petroleum products like gasoline.

So if energy independence is an unrealistic goal, how does everyone get the fuel they need, especially in a world of rising demand, supply disruptions, natural disasters, and unstable regimes?

True global energy security will be a result of cooperation and engagement, not isolationism. When investment and expertise are allowed to flow freely across borders, the engine of innovation is ignited, prosperity is fueled and the energy available to everyone increases. At the same time, balancing the needs of producers and consumers is as crucial as increasing supply and curbing demand. Only then will the world enjoy energy peace-of-mind.

Succeeding in securing energy for everyone doesn't have to come at the expense of anyone. Once we all start to think differently about energy, then we can truly make this promise a reality.

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## Projected Global Oil Demand

- 2004 DEMAND  
82 mbpd\*
- 2030 DEMAND  
115 mbpd



Source: International Energy Agency  
\*millions barrels per day

## OBJECTIVE

### ENERGY IMPORTS BY OIL EXPORTING COUNTRIES

|              | GASOLINE | ELECTRICITY | NATURAL GAS | COAL |
|--------------|----------|-------------|-------------|------|
| Saudi Arabia |          |             |             |      |
| Russia       |          |             |             |      |
| Norway       |          |             |             |      |
| UAE          |          |             |             |      |
| Nigeria      |          |             |             |      |

Source: Energy Information Administration

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

- DIVERSIFY ENERGY SUPPLIES
- FIND MORE TRADITIONAL FUELS
- DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES AND RENEWABLES
- FOSTER OPEN MARKETS & TRANSPARENCY
- ENCOURAGE CONSERVATION/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

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**LOUIS ARMSTRONG**  
WAS THE FIRST MAN TO  
WALK ON THE MOON.

**I**t's a long way from the Apollo Theatre to the Apollo program. And while his playing may have been "as lofty as a moon flight," as *Time* magazine once suggested, that would be as close as Louis Daniel Armstrong would ever get to taking "one small step for man."

But as the jazz musician of the



*Instead of a giant leap, Louis Armstrong delivered one giant free-form crazy jazz groove for mankind.*

20th century, giant



*Armstrong left his footprints on the jazz world, wearing lace-up oxfords.*

leaps were simply a matter of course for Satchmo. For no one has ever embodied the art form the way he did. It was he who helped make virtuoso solos a part

of the vocabulary. It was he who was honored with the title "American goodwill ambassador" by the State Department. It was he who was the last jazz musician to hit #1 on the Billboard pop chart.

Not bad for a kid whose first experience with

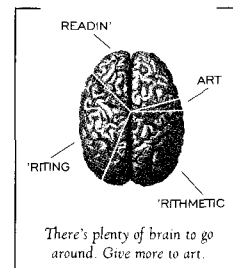
the trumpet was as a guest in a correctional home for wayward boys. If only today's schools were as enlightened and informed as that reformatory was.

Alas, the arts are dismissed as extravagant in today's schools. This, despite all the studies that show parents believe music and dance and art and drama make

their children much better students and better people.

If you feel like your kids aren't getting their fair share, make some noise. To find out how, or for more information about the benefits of arts education, please visit us on the web at

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This July, for the third straight year, The Aspen Institute co-hosted the Aspen Ideas Festival. What follows are excerpts from this year's discussions, including Colin Powell on his attempt to avoid war with Iraq, Richard Branson on the dawn of private spaceflight, Thomas Friedman on why the world isn't really going green, and Bill Clinton on whether he did enough to prevent 9/11.

# Ideas and Consequences

## COLIN POWELL on the decision to go to war

*The former secretary of state talked about his role in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq.*

I tried to avoid this war. I went to the president in August of 2002, after coming back from a trip and seeing all the planning that was under way, and we had a long meeting upstairs in the residence ... For the better part of two and a half [hours], I took him through not only the military planning that was being done in the Pentagon but ... through the consequences of going into an Arab country and becoming the occupiers.

It is said that I used the "Pottery Barn rule." I never did it; [Thomas] Friedman did it ... But what I did say ... [is that] once you break it, you are going to own it, and we're going to be responsible for 26 million people standing there looking at us. And it's going to suck up a good 40 to 50 percent of the Army for years. And it's going to take all the oxygen out

of the political environment ... He took it all aboard, and he said, "What should we do?" And I said, "Well, we should first inform—let us take it to the United Nations. Because they are the offended party. It is their resolutions that have been offended."

... I said to the president, "If we can solve this diplomatically, are you prepared to accept that—even if it means

that we have a changed regime in Baghdad, with Saddam Hussein still there but no longer a danger or a threat ... ?" And it was not something that he was immediately attracted to. But he said yes, he would have to, and we tried. But at that time ... I also had to say to him ... "You are

the president; you will have to make the ultimate judgment; and if the judgment is 'This isn't working, and we don't think it is going to solve the problem,' then if military action is undertaken, I'm with you; I support you."

And frankly, when military action was undertaken, it looked like it was extremely successful. It was a lack of

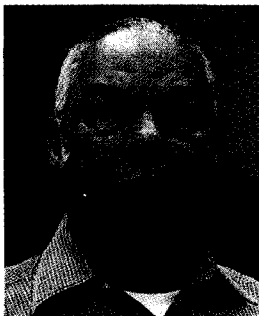
planning for these latter phases—and the things that got out of control—that really has brought us to this point. And so, I could have stopped it by quitting? I assure you that would not have done it. And to quit while it was under way was not my way of doing business in serving in the administration.

## MICHAEL SANDEL on the Supreme Court

*Sandel, a Harvard professor and political philosopher, discussed the Supreme Court's prominence in American political life.*

Tocqueville noticed this back in the 1830s ... almost every political question is turned into a question about rights, because the idea of rights and of individual rights [is] so deeply ingrained, not only in the Constitution or in the Bill of Rights, but also in American public culture, in the political culture.

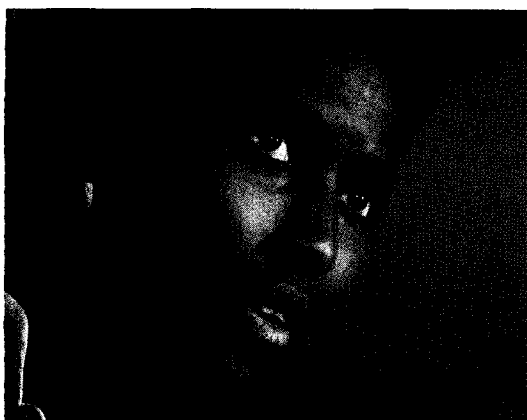
We cannot argue so much in the name of the good society, or the good life, or even the common good. It is a more natural reflex to think about every dispute and argument and political controversy ... [as] a debate about rights, sometimes competing rights, and how they should





be resolved ... It is the Court's business to interpret the Constitution and to define rights. And I think that is one of the reasons that so many of our public political questions are turned into questions first about rights, and therefore they wind up in court.

I am not sure that is an altogether desirable thing ... because sometimes what happens is that by pushing everything into the language of rights, and therefore into a legal question, we fail as a society—as a political community, really—to address and to thrash out among ourselves the competing conceptions of the good life and of the good society that underlie a lot of our debates about rights.



**AYAAN HIRSI ALI**  
on Islam and violence

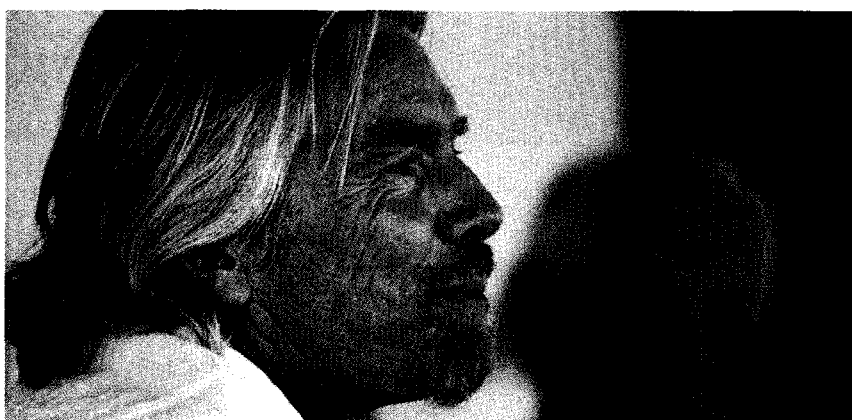
*Hirsi Ali, a critic of Islam, argued that there is a deep link between Muslim faith and violence.*

I think fortunately the majority of Muslims today will not commit acts of terrorism. But to argue that there is nothing in Islam that leads to violence—that would be a weak argument to a false argument, because if you define *Islam* as “submission to the will of Allah,” and then you find out what that submission means ... you find out that ... the sixth obligation is to convert others to Islam, first by peaceful means, then by violent means.

If a wife is disobedient, you beat her. If something is stolen, you amputate the hand of the thief. That's sharia; that's the Islamic law ... The Vatican City of Islam, Saudi Arabia, has sharia and enforces

these laws, and every time any group of people succeeds in establishing sharia or Islamic law, anywhere from the Taliban in Afghanistan to Pakistan to Iran to ... the Zamfara province in Nigeria ... these laws are applied, they are uniform, and they are recognizable.

So then Islam is violent—you can't argue ... that it's not a violent religion. Then you will say, “What about Judaism? What about Christianity?” Now, adherents of these religions over the centuries have been pacified to understand and accept the separation of the divine and the worldly ... Nowhere in the Muslim world has that profound pacification of Islam ... taken place. And I think that is the difference.



**RICHARD BRANSON**  
on spaceflight

*The maverick British billionaire discussed his plans for private space tours.*

I assumed, having seen the moon landing, that I would be able to go into space in my lifetime. But you know ... NASA needed some competition. There needed to be a company that could actually offer people the chance of actually going to space, and so in 1991, we formed the company Virgin Galactic Airways. I like the name ...

I then set off around the world to meet every zany, mad scientist I could find who was interested in rockets and space technology ... and then finally came across Burt Rutan, who's a genius ... So we agreed to sponsor SpaceShipOne with him, and we watched the three magnificent flights in SpaceShipOne, and then—using that technology—we're now

building SpaceShipTwo, which is twice as big as SpaceShipOne ... A year from now ... it'll go on its first test flight, and 18 months from now, you know, myself, my children, and my parents ... God willing, will go up ...

The initial flights will go about 70 miles into space, so basically you'll take off, you'll go up to 60,000 feet, you'll be attached under the mother ship, you'll then drop away, you'll then have the biggest rush of your life ... From naught to 3,500 miles an hour in 10 seconds. And then in space you'll unbuckle, and we've got these enormous big windows you'll be able to float around looking back at the Earth. And Burt has come up with this really unique device, which is basically

what he calls his “feathering mechanism” ... It comes back into the Earth's atmosphere like a shuttlecock, which slows it up, so you don't have the problems that NASA has with its reentry system ...

If you've got a mother-in-law, we can always sort out, you know, one-way tickets.

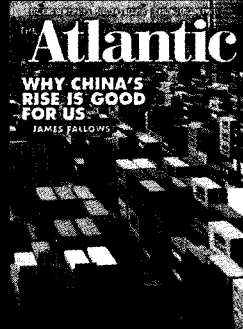
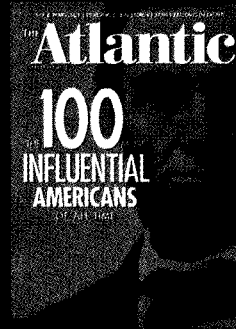
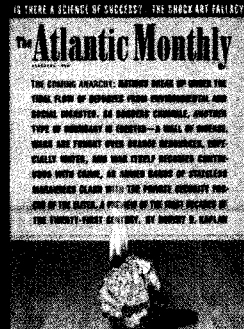
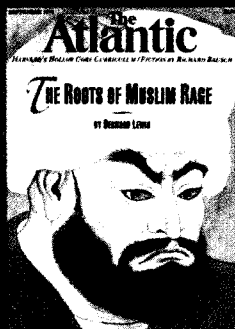
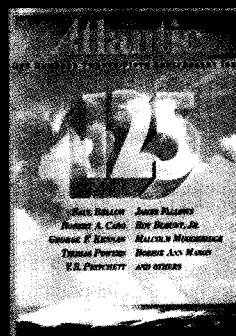
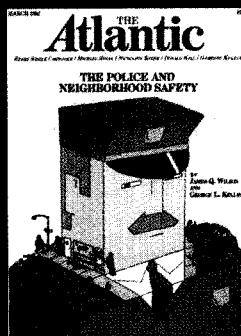
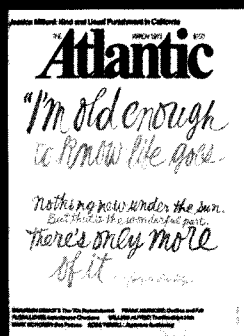
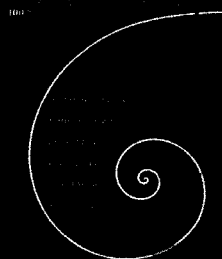
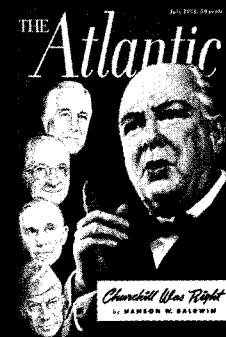
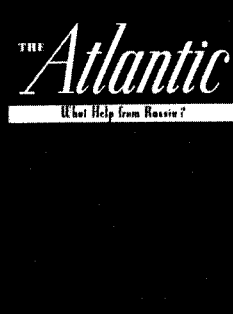
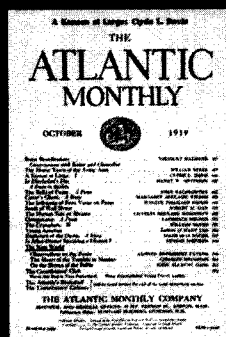
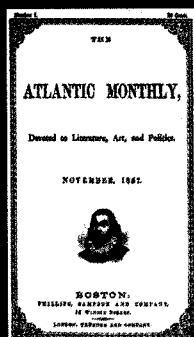
**JOEL KOTKIN**  
on suburbia

*Kotkin, the author of The City: A Global History, defended the suburbs and argued that America is getting more, rather than less, suburban.*

Now, there are many things wrong with suburbs ... but we have to understand something: We created the first mass middle class in the history of the world, where people actually owned their own land and owned their own

# THE Atlantic

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home ... If there's anything basic to the American experience and to American success, it's been this.

Now, is this coming to an end? Well, I think the process is continuing. In 1920, 20 percent of the population lived in the 30 densest counties in the country; today, about 11 percent do. In the first half of the 2000s, nearly 90 percent of all growth in metropolitan areas took place in the periphery ... Despite everything you read in the newspaper about empty-nesters moving back into the city and all the real-estate speculation, the growth has been in the suburbs ... and particularly outer-ring suburbs.

Now, why is this happening? I think the biggest reason is again what one historian called the "universal aspiration." And it's interesting: The same trends are happening in places like Japan and Western Europe, where there's great transit systems, where gasoline costs ... \$6 a gallon. Despite all of [these] things, and even where [there isn't] much population growth, you continue to have this movement. There is something in the human spirit ... that wants to live in some degree of privacy and some space of their own.

## DIANNE FEINSTEIN

on Iraq

*The Democratic senator from California discussed why the American mission in Iraq needs to change.*

This has been going on now for four and a half years. This isn't World War II; this is a small country ... You look at trying to make a democracy out of a country that has never known democracy, that has only known strongman rule, that has no functioning institutions that are necessary for a democracy ... It is essentially still a tribal society. And you see a Shia-led government where most of the ministers don't report to work, or half of the legislature doesn't show up, where [Prime Minister Nouri al-] Maliki has been saying, "Yes, we will do, we will do, we will do," month after month, and nothing happens.

... I think we have to really come to grips with where American national-

security interests rest. And in my view, they don't rest with sustaining a government. They may rest with seeing that Iraq is not a safe harbor for terrorists. They may rest with seeing the same thing doesn't happen in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They certainly do rest with seeing a Palestinian-Israeli peace settlement. And they certainly do rest ... with the restoration of American credibility abroad. I have never known a time in my lifetime of traveling abroad when Americans are as hated as they are today.

... So where am I going with this? ... I believe there is a bellwether that is going to change this fall. Whether it is before [General David] Petraeus reports or after Petraeus reports, I don't know. But the patience has worn thin. And the cost is so great. And, you know, back in Washington, I think it is once a week, they run the photographs of the American men and women killed in action. And you look at these faces, and they are all so young. And at some point you say, "Enough is enough."



## THOMAS FRIEDMAN

on the cost of going green

*The New York Times columnist argued that the world needs to "get real" about what it will take to combat climate change.*

I am not a skeptic about global warming. It's happening. I am a total skeptic that we are really doing anything about it. I think we are in the middle of a huge

green bubble ... You'll pardon me when I hear people say, "We're in the midst of a green revolution." Oh, green revolution.

Did you ever study a revolution in history? You ever seen a revolution in history where nobody got hurt? That's the green revolution. In the green revolution, nobody gets hurt—we're all winners ... Exxon's green. They give \$100 million to Stanford ... Dick Cheney's green. He's for alternative fuels, yeah. He's for liquefied coal. Dick Cheney's green. We are all green now. Welcome to the green revolution, where nobody gets hurt.

... This isn't the green revolution, friends. This is a party ... Twenty years ago—15 years ago—we all talked here about the [information technology] revolution. Do you think that was pain-free? ... Oh, everyone wasn't a winner in the IT revolution. There are a lot of old-legacy industries that didn't get it. And they got steamrolled. And ladies and gentlemen, today the old-legacy industries, they control this story; they control that policy mechanism in Washington. They are tough, and they will fight dirty. They are not going anywhere.

And that's why we are having a green party, not a green revolution. Do not kid yourself for one second.

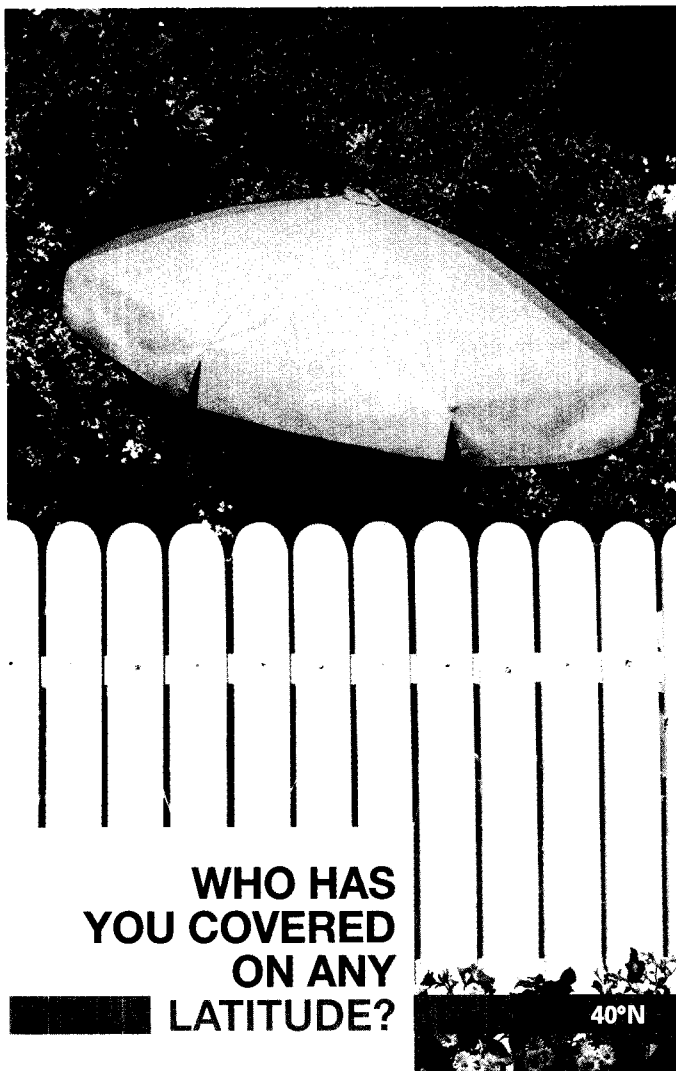
## SALLAI MERIDOR

on Israel and Palestine

*The Israeli ambassador discussed his nation's decision to accept the partition of the Holy Land.*

Israel has made a decision which I not only diplomatically but personally fully support: that for the future of Israel and the future of the region, we need to compromise with the Palestinians and separate the land that we believe is ours and they believe is theirs, for the future of our children. It's easy for me to say; it is very difficult emotionally ... We are talking about the land that has been promised to us in the Bible, the core of the heritage of the Jewish people. We know it will necessitate the uprooting of tens of thousands of the best of Israel; we know it will mean a change of Israel's ... national narrative. And you open the Bible, you read about





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the very places, some of which we'll have to tell our children we have given up forever. Not tactically, not Hamas-like, but given up forever for peace.

But we've made this decision, and the decision is, in my view, in the very basic Zionist context ... If you go to the text of the mission of the Zionist movement as articulated in 1897 ... there were three elements there. One, that it should be a Jewish state, a state for the Jewish people. Second, it didn't say "in the entire land of Israel"; it said "*in the land of Israel*." And it had to conform with basic universal norms, the first of which is the democracy and equality of human beings.

So ... we need to make sure that we maintain Israel forever as a Jewish and democratic state, with a large Jewish majority living in peace with its neighbors, and for that we need ... to adjust our policy to the original narrative of Zionism.

### BILL CLINTON

#### on the responsibility for 9/11

*The former president was asked whether his administration did enough to prevent the September 11 terrorist attacks.*

**W**e prevented an enormous number of attacks. The Republicans, let me remind you, when I tried to get Osama bin Laden, based on good intelligence, they accused me of "wag the dog," and they made fun of me, and they said we shouldn't be doing anything about this. And one of the reasons I thought President Bush was disserved is a lot of his neocon advisers said that we were crazy when we told him in the transition that the biggest problem was bin Laden. They said any fool knew that Saddam Hussein was a bigger threat to our security than Osama bin Laden.

... So the same people that are criticizing me now criticized me then, because I was obsessed with bin Laden. We dealt with him four or five days a week, every week, for the last four years I was president. I did not turn down one request for the use of force. We tried to mount a CIA operation to go in and take him out; they couldn't do it. We contracted

with tribals to try to take him out; they couldn't do it. I was willing to use whatever power I could—we didn't have, until 9/11, any kind of basing rights, remember, in Uzbekistan or anyplace else; the logistics of doing this were much different.

I would've attacked him at the end of my presidency, even though they would've accused me of trying to affect the outcome of the presidential election, but the CIA and the FBI had not jointly certified that he was responsible for the USS *Cole* bombing, even though we all knew it. If I had been president in the spring of 2001, when they did confirm that, I would've given the Taliban an ultimatum ... But I wasn't there then.

... I don't think there's any question that we were far more obsessed with him—and I don't mind using the word—than the Bush administration. Their obsession was Saddam. You can draw your own conclusions about who should've done what when; I don't think we should be in the business of blaming anybody for 9/11.

### JESSYE NORMAN

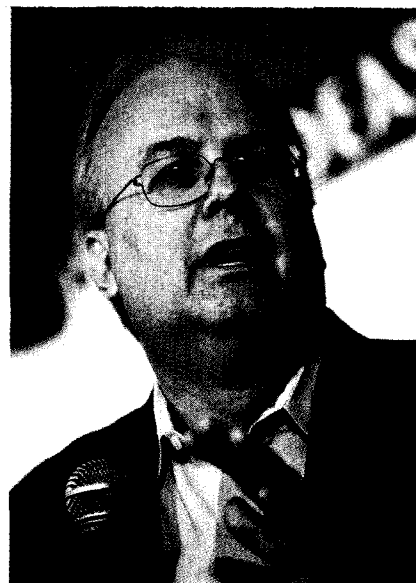
#### on the arts and public schools

*Norman, an opera singer, argued for the necessity of arts education.*

**I** cannot claim this idea as my own, but it is surely one about which I am passionate ... that is the necessity of the arts in our lives, the need for the arts in the education of our children.

I do not mean only the home that I have found in music, but all of the arts—from the written word to the most ephemeral dance step, from the most permanent of carvings in wood or stone to a canvas so covered in ideas that it simply takes the breath away.

... When our schools and our school systems say that they must save money, the arts are the first to go. We have to say no to this ... Resolve to be acquainted yourselves with the teachings of your own hearts; as I always call it, your "soul's music" ... Resolve to make sure today's young minds are nourished completely, and that their spirits are encouraged to fly.



### KARL ROVE

#### on Iran

*The president's then-adviser discussed the administration's strategy for containing Iran's nuclear ambitions.*

**L**ook, this is a country with a fragile economy ... 40 percent of their gasoline comes from India. They take the oil, send it to India, refine it into gasoline, and bring it back ... They depend for most of their food on imports. They grow very little of their food. Their consumer goods are almost entirely imported. They make very little in the way of their consumer-market goods internally. They are a very vulnerable economy.

We have been working through our partners the EU5, Russia, etc. Look, we played our sanction card in 1979. There are other sanctions—little itsy-bitsy sanction cards—that we could conceivably play. Some of them are being played by state legislatures, where they are saying that their retirement systems have to divest of any investment in a company that does a certain amount of business in Iran ... But we played our big card in 1979.

Our object now [has] got to be to get the rest of the world to be serious about playing their cards, and convincing them that they would have a problem that requires them to join with us in playing the sanction card ... That process has been long, involved, complicated, but it has been moving along ... As time has gone on, and particularly as we have seen changes in Germany and in France, we have got greater hopes that we will be able to bring about a serious international regime that will help force Iran back to the table. ▀

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## 150 YEARS OF THE ATLANTIC

*This is the 19th in a series of archival excerpts in honor of the magazine's 150th anniversary.*

*For the full text of these articles, visit [www.theatlantic.com/ideastour](http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour).*



# Philanthropy

## THE SUBTLE PROBLEMS OF CHARITY

*February 1899*

BY JANE ADDAMS

*A decade after co-founding Hull House, the renowned settlement house in Chicago, the pioneering social worker Jane Addams made note of the sometimes-enlightening challenge of dispensing aid to men and women of a different class and background.*

Of the various struggles which a decade of residence in a settlement implies, none have made a more definite impression on my mind than the incredibly painful difficulties which involve both giver and recipient when one person asks charitable aid of another ...

A most striking incongruity, at once apparent, is the difference between the emotional kindness with which relief is given by one poor neighbor to another poor neighbor, and the guarded care with which relief is given by a charity visitor to a charity recipient ...

When the charity visitor comes in, all the neighbors are baffled as to what her circumstances may be. They know she does not need a new pair of shoes, and rather suspect that she has a dozen pairs at home; which indeed she sometimes has ...

The visitor is continually surprised to find that the safest platitudes may be challenged. She refers quite naturally to the "horrors of the saloon," and discovers that the head of her visited family, who knows

the saloons very well, does not connect them with "horrors" at all. He remembers all the kindnesses he has received there, the free lunch and treating which go on, even when a man is out of work and not able to pay up; the poor fellows who are allowed to sit in their warmth when every other door is closed to them; the loan of five dollars he got there, when the charity visitor was miles away, and he was threatened with eviction ...

The same thing happens when she urges upon him a spirit of independence ... There is no use in talking independence to a man when he is going to stand in a row, hat in hand, before an office desk, in the hope of getting a position ...

The charity visitor ... discovers how incorrigibly bourgeois her standards have been, and it takes but a little time to reach the conclusion that she cannot insist so strenuously upon the conventions of her own class.

*Fol. 53, No. 496, pp. 163-178*

## STATE PENSIONS OR CHARITY?

*May 1930*

BY ALICE HAMILTON

*Seven months after the stock-market crash of 1929, Alice Hamilton, a doctor who had worked with Jane Addams at Hull House and was now the first woman on the faculty at Harvard Medical School, made a case for government-issued pensions for the needy:*

I must ... join with those who stand for state pensions for the aged poor rather than support given through private charity ...

Not long ago I was in an iron foundry, watching the pouring of molten iron into moulds. I noticed one man, older than the rest, staggering along with his heavy ladle, which he could only just carry, although, arrived at his moulds, he did a neat job. He was plainly in constant fear that he could not make it; he was straining every muscle to keep up with the others, to hold on to his job. As I watched him, sensing keenly his fear and his desperate effort, I heard my guide say: 'Come back here in three months and you won't see any of these men. I'll show you what we are doing now.' He took me to another building and there I saw an automatic machine pouring iron into moulds, doing the work of a dozen men and under the charge of three slim lads of less than twenty years. The man I had been watching had no need to strain his heart over his work—he was doomed to be scrapped in any case ...

In thinking of old-age pensions we must take into consideration a great new class of needy people. These are not men who have lived all their lives on the edge of poverty; they are self-respecting artisans, skilled workers, men who have made good wages and held their heads high. At a moment when such a man still possesses all his old skill of eye and hand, and the gains of long experience, he finds himself no longer wanted, of less use in our American social system than his little

feather-brained daughter with a year's training in a business school ...

It will be harder and harder for him to find any sort of job, even if he dyes his hair and makes pitiful efforts to hide the senility of fifty years ... Personally, I am very loath to accept the verdict that a dependence on the benevolence of the uppermost class toward the lowest class is the only possible American way of solving the problem of the poor, or even that it makes for a healthy state and contentment at the bottom of society ...

The American workman may earn high wages ... but even if he does, he must live all his working life under the shadow of three Damoclean swords: sickness, loss of his job, and old age, and against these our country, the richest in the world, gives him no protection.

Would generous gifts to organized charity remedy this lack? Well, let him who asks that question imagine for a moment that he himself is faced at sixty-five with the alternatives of private charity, administered with the greatest tact and understanding, and a state pension administered as a matter of official routine. I think there can be no doubt of his choice.

*Vol. 145, No. 5, pp. 653-657*

## PRIVATE FORTUNES AND THE PUBLIC FUTURE

*August 1935*

BY ABRAHAM FLEXNER

*In the midst of the Great Depression, as the federal government began to take an increasingly active role in looking after citizen welfare, the educator Abraham Flexner, who founded the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, urged readers to remember that private philanthropy, too, has a crucial role to play:*

Quite recently a large assembly gathered in the City of New York to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the

founding of the Montefiore Hospital for Chronic Diseases. This institution was established fifty years ago by a group of devoted and grateful men and women and by them dedicated to the relief of suffering humanity ...

This institution is only one of hundreds—hospitals, schools, universities, museums, orchestras, and various associations—which relieve the state of part of its burden, and which, I venture to say, as a general rule carry on more economically and more effectively than similar institutions which are managed by public authorities ...

We happen to be living in an era when, in consequence of human gullibility and fallibility, the world has been overtaken by panic and distress such as private initiative alone cannot cope with. To an extent that could previously never have been expected the cities, the states, and the central government have been compelled to undertake to provide relief where voluntary agencies have been unequal to the task. I have no criticism to make on this score. It is a splendid and inspiring thing that at a time of great social crisis the American nation has found itself possessed of a form of government which can relieve the poor, clothe the naked, and provide support for the unemployed; but at this very moment when the government is doing all that it can humanly do in these various directions it behooves us to remember the essence of our tradition of private effort and benefaction ...

Civilization and culture ... cannot be obtained unless abundance and leisure exist ... It is important to this country to emphasize the fact that the rôle of private effort has not been exhausted and that, unless we are to abandon all our traditions in government, in philanthropy, and in education, it cannot be abandoned ... I cannot forget the vast debt that we owe ... to those thousands and hundreds of thousands who have contributed small means as well as large to building up institutions of learning, museums, and hospitals

which represent the high-water mark of our civilization ...

It might even be maintained that the level of a given civilization can perhaps be measured by the extent of private initiative, private responsibility, private organization in all the fields open to human culture ...

The accumulation of fortunes through foresight, unusual capacity, energy, thrift, and native honorable shrewdness is in itself no crime. On the contrary ... fortunes so accumulated may be made the sources from which great philanthropic, cultural, and beneficent enterprises ultimately flow.

*Vol. 156, No. 2, pp. 215-224*

## THE CAPITALIST THREAT

*February 1997*

BY GEORGE SOROS

*In 1997, the billionaire and international philanthropist George Soros contended that great fortunes are made to be redistributed.*

Although I have made a fortune in the financial markets, I now fear that the untrammelled intensification of laissez-faire capitalism and the spread of market values into all areas of life is endangering our open and democratic society ...

By taking the conditions of supply and demand as given and declaring government intervention the ultimate evil, laissez-faire ideology has effectively banished income or wealth redistribution. I can agree that all attempts at redistribution interfere with the efficiency of the market, but it does not follow that no attempt should be made ... Wealth does accumulate in the hands of its owners, and if there is no mechanism for redistribution, the inequities can become intolerable. "Money is like muck, not good except it be spread." Francis Bacon was a profound economist.

*Vol. 279, No. 2, pp. 45-55*





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Magda J. Perez

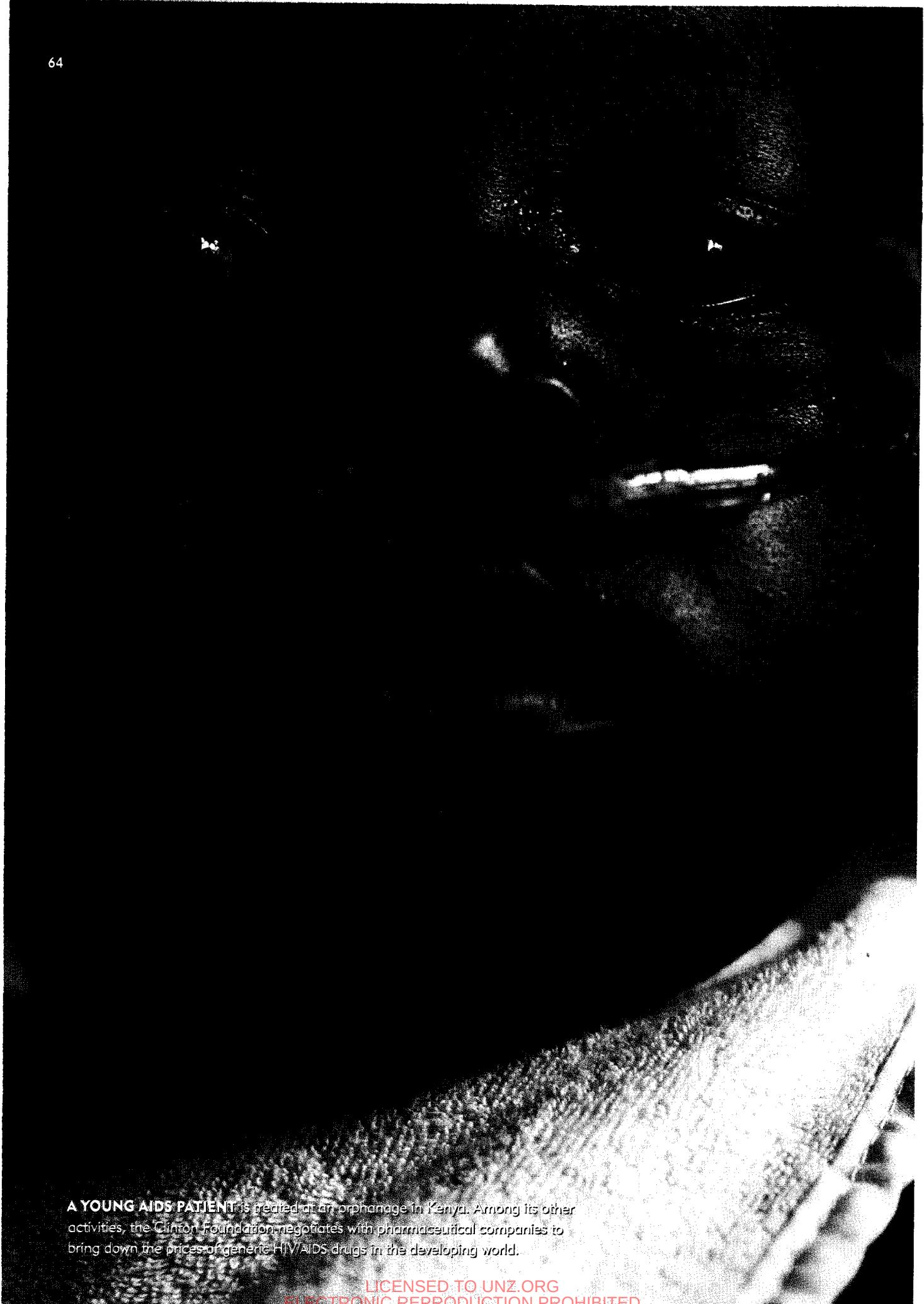
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\* The 2008 2-mode hybrids are estimated to have a 25 percent or more combined fuel economy improvement over current Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon models.



**A YOUNG AIDS PATIENT** is treated at an orphanage in Kenya. Among its other activities, the Clinton Foundation negotiates with pharmaceutical companies to bring down the prices of generic HIV/AIDS drugs in the developing world.

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How Bill Clinton, Ira Magaziner, and a team of management consultants are creating new markets, reinventing philanthropy—and trying to save the world

# 'This Is Not Charity.'

BY JONATHAN RAUCH

He is a business consultant, seemingly typical of the breed. Height and build average, hair a gray-tinged brown, age 51. His name is Stephen Crollius, and he has worked for 21 years as a strategist at a series of high-priced consultancies. There is not a boardroom in the country where he would look or feel out of place. His suit and tie are sharp and pressed, but he looks tired, and with reason: He and a handful of colleagues have effectively launched a new business in just six months. His travel itinerary has been killing, and when I ask about

his work habits, he says, "On any given day I get up and I start to work, and I work all day until I'm able to feel like nothing bad will happen if »



I stop working. If possible, I try to go a bit beyond that. I eat dinner, I go to sleep, I get up the next morning, and I do the same thing again."

At a press conference tomorrow, his boss will announce the first fruit of these labors, a business deal involving five banks, four industrial companies, and cities on several continents. It is mid-May, and Crolius and I are sitting over drinks (nonalcoholic) in the lobby of a Manhattan hotel. A colleague of his, Jamie Russell, approaches. He is younger, British, with glossy brown hair and a model-fresh, collegian face. He has the precocious self-assurance of a man who, at 32, has already obtained a bachelor's degree from Harvard and an M.B.A. from Stanford, worked for McKinsey & Co. in London, New York, and Silicon Valley, and was among the first employees of a London-based investment bank that specializes in carbon trading. When I ask him to explain the deal he just helped put together, Russell produces a pencil and draws a cost graph. Perhaps catching my quizzical look—I have never even taken a business course—he says, "It's a piece of McKinsey analysis, really." This does not help me all that much.

And their business plan is not to trade derivatives, or launch a hedge fund, or consult on outsourcing, but to stop global warming.

And the chairman of their firm is Bill Clinton, who, somewhat to his own surprise, aims to repurpose business methods and business culture to solve the world's problems—and who hopes to reinvent philanthropy while he is at it.

It was in the spirit of an experimenter, rather than a visionary, that Clinton established a foundation. What would become the Clinton Foundation's signature initiative, an HIV/AIDS program, began fortuitously.

The story is one he enjoys telling, and tells often. I heard it in April, in his office in Harlem. The room is long and narrow, decorated in warm beiges, its walls and shelves lined with pictures and mementos. A portrait of Winston Churchill glowers from behind the former president's desk, which Clinton left unused during our interview. Instead he gestured me to a sofa, sank into an armchair, and slung his left leg over one of its arms. He began the interview in this

To Clinton, profit is necessary and entirely legitimate,  
a point he makes to anyone who will listen.  
'I think it's wrong to ask anyone to lose money.'

The lobby is a forest of pinstripe suits and smart skirts. Crolius and Russell and several dozen colleagues have gathered from around the world for the next day's announcement. The hotel has become their impromptu headquarters. Conducting a meeting from a nearby armchair is a tall, elegant man of 61, who has broken the pinstripe dress code by wearing a sports jacket. This is Göran Carstedt, of Gothenburg, Sweden. He can safely be numbered among Europe's most accomplished executives: In the 1980s he headed Volvo's operations in France and Sweden, and in the 1990s he built IKEA's fledgling U.S.

business into a blockbuster success before going on to head IKEA in Europe. Clustered in a corner are younger staffers newly hired to oversee operations in five cities.

Anyone not engaged in conversation is hunched over a BlackBerry. Some are engaged in conversation *and* hunched over a BlackBerry.

The scene could be mistaken for a convocation at any cutting-edge business consultancy or investment-banking house or money-management firm. But all of these people are working for a fraction of what they could be earning. Crolius took a pay cut "north of 50 percent." Carstedt draws a "minor" salary that "somewhat" covers his expenses.

laid-back mode but gradually grew animated, sitting erect, leaning forward, punctuating with his hands.

Getting in to see him was not difficult: He said he was "thrilled" that I wanted to write about his foundation's work. "I'm just so glad you're taking this seriously," he told me. "What I long to do is to see this integrated into every philanthropic activity from now on, where it's appropriate." I met with him on the day Boris Yeltsin's death hit the news, a busy day, but as our interview stretched on past the hour mark, he showed no sign of taking the hint from aides who stood, paced, glared at wristwatches, and finally resorted to whispering into his ear. "Go ahead," he told me. "Keep going. I'm too wordy about this. I care a lot about it."

The story he tells is that in July 2002, when the foundation had only 12 employees (it now has hundreds working on HIV/AIDS alone), he and Nelson Mandela went to an AIDS conference in Spain, where the prime minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, a small Caribbean country, said to him, "You know, we don't have a denial problem, we don't have a stigma problem. We have a money and an organizational problem." The foundation began its AIDS efforts that year in the Bahamas, and immediately discovered that the government there was paying \$3,600 a year per person for generic drugs whose list price was about \$500. It turned out that middlemen were taking steep markups,

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For a transcript of the author's  
discussion with Bill Clinton, visit:  
[www.theatlantic.com/foundation](http://www.theatlantic.com/foundation).



which the foundation eliminated by making a deal with the manufacturer. "It got me to thinking about how once more we had a public-goods market that was not only underfinanced; it was disorganized," Clinton says.

Clinton can and certainly does raise money, but he didn't have enough to endow a major grant-making foundation. What he did have was an ex-presidential bully pulpit, a deep Rolodex, the power to attract attention and talent, and an inkling that those assets might be used to do for public goods something like what entrepreneurs and investment bankers do in the corporate world: midwife new markets or scale up underdeveloped ones. The idea is to identify markets that aren't supplying enough socially beneficial goods or services to meet the potential demand, and then to lead them to a new equilibrium. "What we tried to do," Clinton says, "was to get them to go from what I call a 'jewelry-store model' to a 'grocery-store model'—from a high-profit, low-volume, uncertain-payment business to a low-margin, high-volume, certain-payment business."

None of that was clear in the summer of 2002, when Clinton made the decision that may do more than anything to shape his postpresidential legacy. To launch his HIV initiative, he turned not to a philanthropist or public-health doctor or development professional. "It was a *system* thing," he says. "It's the absence of effective systems that I believe is the primary factor holding a lot of these countries back. We wanted people who could operate efficiently in the nonprofit field in the same way they had in business." So he called a business consultant named Ira Magaziner.

**BILL CLINTON,**  
photographed in August  
by Samantha Appleton



“**I**ra,” as everyone calls him, is a man with a past. He has been Clinton’s friend since they were at Oxford together, on Rhodes scholarships, in the late 1960s. Magaziner has had a two-track career as business consultant and social reformer, with more success at the former than at the latter. As a boy, he led a strike at his summer camp, and as a student at Brown University, he led a major curriculum reform. In the early 1970s, he organized a group of recent college graduates to live in the wilting postindustrial town of Brockton, Massachusetts, and work for social change—an idiosyncratic effort he later called naive. No less naively, in 1984 he led a state-appointed study commission that cooked up a 1,000-page industrial policy for Rhode Island. The voters rejected it by 4-to-1.

In 1993, he repeated the Rhode Island mistake, this time on a heroic scale. The Clintons tapped him to manage their health-care reform. Again he produced an ambitious, complicated plan, this time running to 1,342 pages; again it bombed politically. Magaziner’s gift is his ability to see entire systems whole, from their smallest details to their global architecture. That made him a successful business consultant, but it did him little good on Capitol Hill, where any plan with more than two or three moving parts is too complicated. Magaziner was a parallel processor, an efficiency expert whose plans depended on simultaneous changes on multiple fronts and levels. He was ill-suited to Washington, where progress is serial and incremental.

Stung, he worked for a while on Internet issues for the Clinton administration and then went back to consulting, which was what he was doing when Clinton called in 2002. Having by then replenished his bank account, he kept one business client and otherwise donated himself to the Clinton Foundation. He takes no salary, saying he wants to instill a volunteer ethic.

I first met Magaziner in 1992, when he was working on the incoming Clinton administration’s transition team. His laser-like intensity and his command of detail were unmistakable then, and no less so when I reconnected with him for this article, in February. Now 59, he retains a quiet, composed demeanor and a rapid-fire manner of speaking, but what was once an unruly shock of gray curls is now a straight corporate cut. He rarely laughs or raises his voice. The words that people use again and again in connection with him are *brilliant* and *driven*. He thrives on impossible deadlines, and his stamina for travel beggars belief: He all but lives in hotels and airplanes, proselytizing, making contacts, initiating negotiations, closing deals. Staff members say they get e-mails from him at midnight and 5 a.m. Asked if his pace is sustainable, he replies, “I still feel 18. I have a feeling if I stop it will all catch up.”

Where exactly Clinton’s role in the foundation ends and Magaziner’s begins is not altogether clear, perhaps not even to them. Sometimes, to an outsider, they seem to share a

brain. Clinton, clearly more than a figurehead, is chairman, guiding spirit, and the big gun strategically deployed for publicity and persuasion. “Without him as anchor and persona,” Magaziner says, “we’d be pounding sand.” Magaziner is effectively chief executive, strategist, recruiter, and senior negotiator, operating with what appears to be free-wheeling authority. “We’ve worked together long enough so he trusts me,” Magaziner says of Clinton.

The sensibility Magaziner brought to the AIDS assignment was that of a business strategist who had helped big companies—General Electric, Black & Decker, Corning—cut costs by consolidating orders, automating communications, and working with suppliers to find efficiencies. With Clinton’s cachet and idealism as a lure, Magaziner set about hiring people in his own image. He wanted people who knew how to put together a business plan, who understood how companies work, and who could talk to line executives in their own language.

Starting with a staff of five, the foundation began visiting drug manufacturers. “I saw that the drugs, even the generic versions, were very high-priced,” Magaziner says, “and I knew that the inherent cost structure couldn’t be that high. I surmised that what was happening is that there were only 70,000 people being treated in the developing world. I surmised the manufacturers weren’t able to get scale economies in production. I began to see that we could aggregate enough demand to form what businesses call a buyers’ club.”

So the foundation went to governments in Africa and the Caribbean and organized demand for AIDS drugs, obtaining intentions to place large orders if prices could be cut. It simultaneously went to drug companies, offering them a much larger and less-volatile market for AIDS drugs in return for lower prices based on the projected higher volume. Although the foundation asked for aggressive “forward pricing” to kick-start demand, it pointedly did not ask for donations or charity. “To be sustainable,” says Magaziner, “this can’t be a charitable act.” Rather, the foundation was offering a business proposition: If we get you the demand, can you get us the supply?

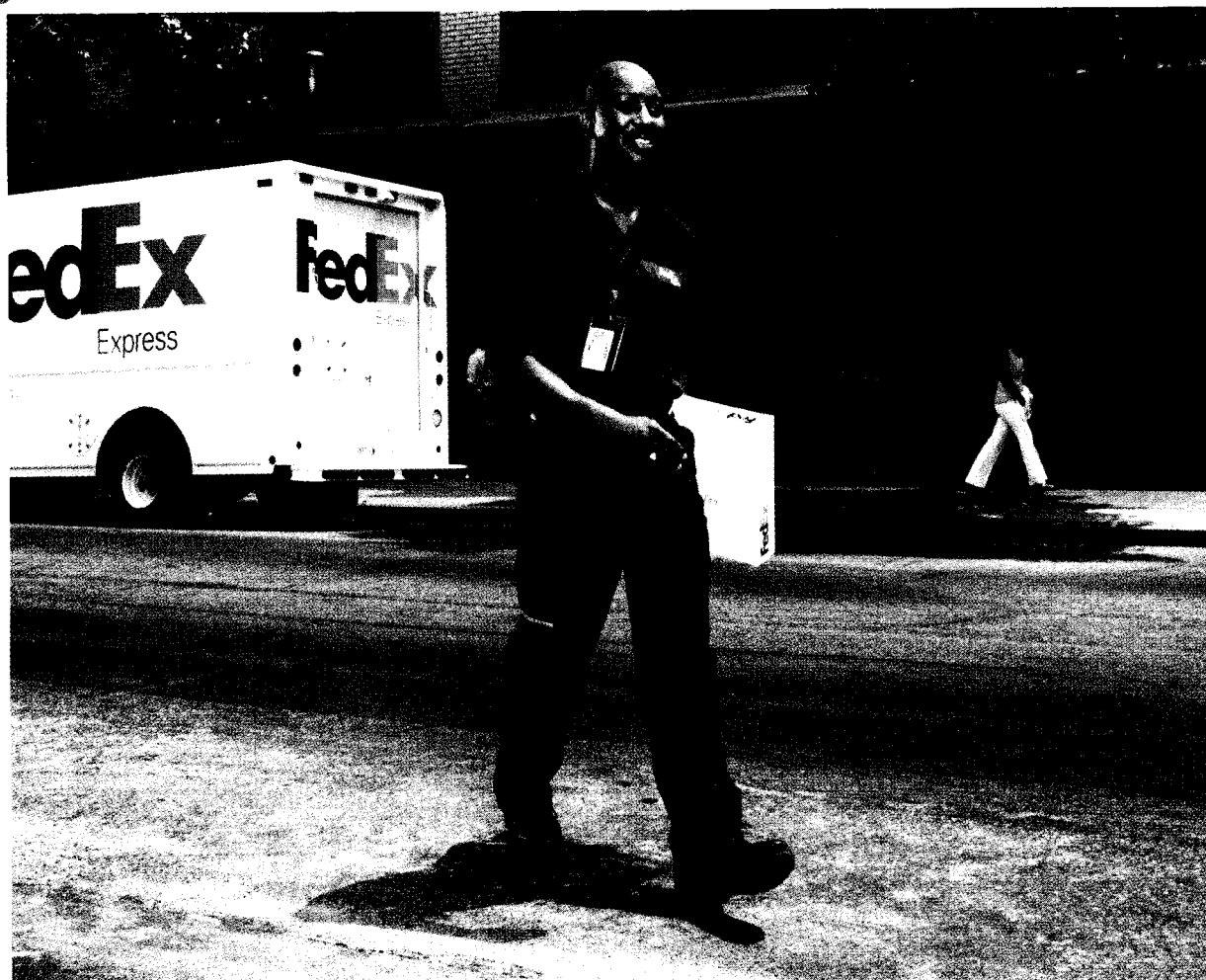
Brand-name pharmaceutical companies refused to play, but generic manufacturers in India and South Africa were interested. The foundation sent staff members to study the companies’ cost structures and to act, in effect, as free consultants, helping find the efficiencies that higher volumes could afford. Then the foundation repeated the process back through the supply chain, with producers of raw materials and other inputs. The approach was pure McKinsey: novel in its application, but routine in its methods, as Clinton himself is the first to point out. “This is not Einstein,” he says. “We didn’t develop the theory of relativity here. All we did was take something that people would naturally do in a purely business context and apply it to the public-goods market.”



..... **WILLIE BELL** .....

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In October 2003, at a news conference in Harlem, Clinton announced price cuts for a number of drugs, notably a reduction of more than 50 percent in the price of a leading three-drug AIDS cocktail. It was the first in a series of foundation-sponsored AIDS-drug price cuts that continue to this day; 750,000 people in 66 countries now get HIV medications through the foundation's purchasing consortium, and, perhaps more important, overall market prices have followed the consortium's prices down.

How much did the foundation reduce drug prices? How many lives were saved? We can never precisely know. AIDS experts I spoke with at the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and Médecins Sans Frontières all pointed out that the foundation was flying with a tailwind. The rise of generic-drug companies, the pressure brought by activists and patients'-rights groups, and billions of new aid dollars were already pushing the HIV-drug market toward higher volumes and lower costs. On the other hand, the experts agreed that the foundation brought prices down faster than they would otherwise have fallen, and that more people got treatment as a result. "It changed the way business was being done," one World Bank official told me.

Within the foundation, a source of some annoyance is that the outside world supposes Clinton to have picked up the phone and jawboned prices down. The real work has been done by hyperkinetic staffers who have negotiated dozens of deals and ground out thousands of pages of cost analysis. Clinton takes particular pride in the fact that the companies that collaborated in cutting prices did not sacrifice profits. "I haven't asked anybody to give us anything," he said in our interview. "All we did was ask the drug manufacturers to adopt a different business strategy. Once we got smooth distribution, quick, certain payment, and really high volumes, they were still making money. They just made it in a different way." To him, profit is necessary and entirely legitimate, a point he makes to anyone who will listen—for example, at the May press conference in New York, where he declared, "I think it's wrong to ask anyone to lose money."

Clinton and Magaziner believed they had stumbled onto something bigger than an AIDS program. "I mean, if you apply this thread of thinking, you'd be thinking about it all the time," Clinton told me. "The longer I've done this, the more I've become convinced that the AIDS drugs were just the tip of the iceberg—that basically there are a huge number of what I call public-goods markets that are disorganized, where the consumer knowledge is imperfect, to say the least, and parenthetically they're almost all underfunded. But if they were better organized and there was more demand for the service or product they were providing, the funding would be there. This is something we can do!"

To establish itself as a paradigm instead of just a program, the market-making model needed a second act,

preferably bigger than the first and in a completely unrelated field. In late 2005, Clinton and Magaziner hit upon global warming.

Clinton says he has been concerned about climate change for years, but that a hostile Congress and cheap oil prevented him from doing much about it when he was in office. Out of office, one day he decided to replace every lightbulb in his house with a compact fluorescent. But when he went to his local hardware store in Chappaqua, New York, he couldn't find bulbs in a lot of the shapes and sizes he needed. "So I literally picked up the phone and called Jeff Immelt"—the CEO of General Electric—"and I said, 'I'm trying to be a good customer. I'm trying to buy American, support GE. I like your eco-initiatives. But I can't fill half these sockets. What am I going to do?' And he said, 'Well, make me a bigger market, and I'll make whatever bulbs you want.'"

It's a charming story, if somewhat tarnished by the fact that, through a spokesman, Immelt said he had no recollection of the conversation. In any event, a lightbulb had lit up in the ex-president's head. "It struck me that we were in the same sort of deal," he says, "where we have very low knowledge of the economic options among consumers, drastic undercapitalization, and a completely disorganized market." In December 2005, Magaziner proposed a global-warming project, and Clinton gave the OK. In January 2006, Magaziner put five researchers to work figuring out what to do.

What to do wasn't clear, and might not have become so but for a stroke of luck. In October 2005, 18 of the world's largest cities—prodded by the deputy mayor of London, a firecracker of a woman by the name of Nicky Gavron—had held a summit where they resolved to do something about global warming. Cities are said to account for 75 percent of energy use and greenhouse-gas emissions, and so if the largest cities reduced their carbon footprint, that could make a real difference. (No one seems to know where the 75 percent figure comes from, but everyone seems to accept it.) Among the cities' resolutions was to create "municipal procurement alliances"—buyers' clubs—to "accelerate the uptake of climate-friendly technologies and measurably influence the marketplace." Those brave words spoken, the cities called for a second summit within 18 months and commenced not doing much, until, early last year, Magaziner got wind of their project.

That April, Magaziner went to see Gavron. "We've got this track record, and we can assemble talent very quickly," she remembers him telling her. When she asked for the foundation's financial support, he parried with a bigger idea. "He said, on the spot, 'We don't want to back you; we want to be your partner.'" The foundation would become, in effect, the cities' operational arm. In August of last year, Clinton, standing with the mayors of London, Los Angeles,

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and San Francisco, announced the Clinton Climate Initiative. The same day, five foundation staffers hit the road, traveling to participating cities around the world—almost 40 were soon on board—to introduce the project.

The climate initiative, in typical Magaziner style, has many moving parts, including technical assistance to cities, networks for sharing best practices, software to measure progress, financial support, and a full-time foundation staff member assigned to each city. But the make-or-break component is a plan to re-equilibrate the market for energy conservation. "What we're doing is jump-starting—accelerating—market forces," Magaziner told me.

Cities own public buildings: offices, schools, police stations, hospitals, fire stations. They set codes for private buildings. They buy and run fleets of vehicles: buses, garbage trucks, police cars, ambulances. They handle water and waste. No city by itself can make a deep dent in carbon emissions or reorganize a global market, but together cities can pool their demand for leading-edge conservation technologies, such as LEDs for traffic lights, systems that capture and burn garbage dumps' waste methane (a potent

greenhouse gas), and alternative-fuel engines for city vehicles. Predictable demand would let suppliers scale up their operations, bringing prices down and creating footholds for technologies on the cusp of commercialization.

That would be step one. Step two, in Magaziner's vision, is to channel a Niagara of private capital into the effort. Energy-saving technologies typically cost more up front but less over time. "So what we're going to be doing is setting up a financing mechanism," he told me. The foundation would help cities borrow in the securities markets against future energy savings. "The whole thing is bankable," Magaziner said. "It's a commercial proposition. This is not charity. The whole concept of this is that the market itself over some period of time is going to deploy all these energy-saving things. The problem is it will happen slowly and gradually." The foundation hopes to reduce decades to years, and years to months.

Magaziner hired Stephen Crolus, the business consultant, and Jamie Russell, the London financier, and Göran Carstedt, the Swedish executive, and other top-level staff. They brought in more business talent at a rapid clip. In

## BITTERSWEET

In your book, *success*  
was a dirty word, *fame*  
even dirtier, *wealth*  
not to be uttered;  
the work was all that mattered.  
I took that to heart, I guess—  
the program if not the prowess—  
in my own monkish fashion:  
"So much to say no to  
before you can start to say yes"  
having long been my motto.  
No, for instance,  
to the bittersweet  
I'm trying to extirpate  
from under the garden fence.  
I'd thought nothing of it  
except that its berries  
might brighten the bare wires  
like a coat of arms on a wall,  
but it's taken over the place

just as your looks have taken over my face—  
lost, one has to assume,  
in the delirium of its own joyous work  
of making the entire universe,  
or at any rate this fence,  
a monument to its own magnificence;  
and not just this swarm of scarlet, orange-winged berries  
or the intractable tanglings  
of vines like stiffened springs,  
but these astounding roots also:  
blood-bright, trailing their corpse-hair capillaries  
down through the topsoil. I yank them out  
only to find they've coiled right down through the shale  
into solid bedrock,  
leaving a lizard tail in each crack  
potent enough to grow the whole lizard back  
just in case there remained any doubt, any question  
as to the error, the sheer utter folly, of planning  
a garden of one's own  
where bittersweet has grown.

—JAMES LASDUN



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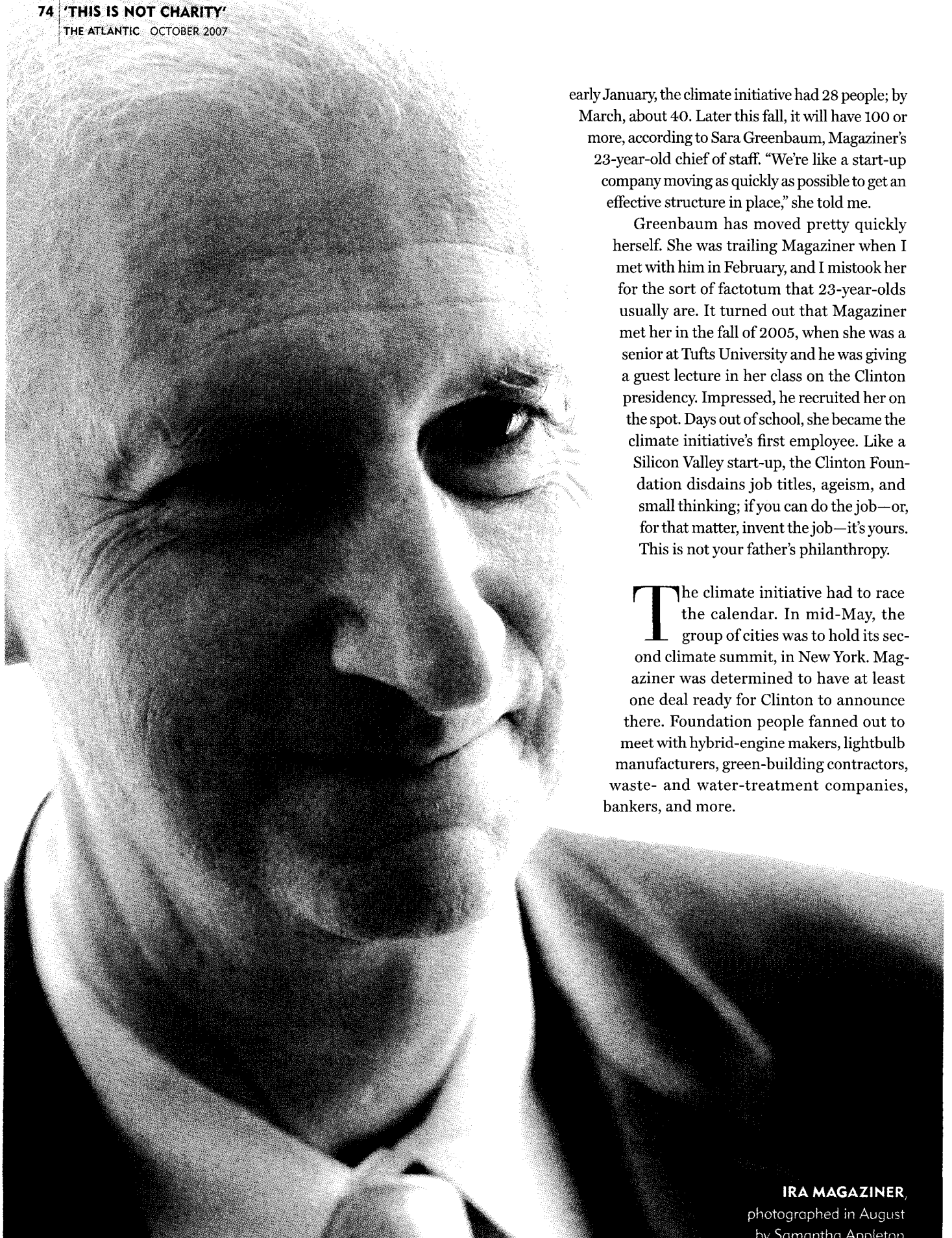
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early January, the climate initiative had 28 people; by March, about 40. Later this fall, it will have 100 or more, according to Sara Greenbaum, Magaziner's 23-year-old chief of staff. "We're like a start-up company moving as quickly as possible to get an effective structure in place," she told me.

Greenbaum has moved pretty quickly herself. She was trailing Magaziner when I met with him in February, and I mistook her for the sort of factotum that 23-year-olds usually are. It turned out that Magaziner met her in the fall of 2005, when she was a senior at Tufts University and he was giving a guest lecture in her class on the Clinton presidency. Impressed, he recruited her on the spot. Days out of school, she became the climate initiative's first employee. Like a Silicon Valley start-up, the Clinton Foundation disdains job titles, ageism, and small thinking; if you can do the job—or, for that matter, invent the job—it's yours. This is not your father's philanthropy.

The climate initiative had to race the calendar. In mid-May, the group of cities was to hold its second climate summit, in New York. Magaziner was determined to have at least one deal ready for Clinton to announce there. Foundation people fanned out to meet with hybrid-engine makers, lightbulb manufacturers, green-building contractors, waste- and water-treatment companies, bankers, and more.

**IRA MAGAZINER**,

photographed in August  
by Samantha Appleton



To understand better what these foundation people do, I spent some time with Nisha Thirumurthy. She is 30, with a cheerful, round face, dark hair parted in the middle, and a vivacious, unpretentious manner. Born in Chennai, India, she moved to the United States at age 11. After college, she wanted to do international development work, but internships with nonprofits left her disappointed. "I felt I was doing the work, and I just never knew what happened with it," she told me. "If you really want to make a difference on a large scale, you have to get the private sector involved."

In January, Crolius brought Thirumurthy, by then an energy consultant, into the climate initiative, to focus on the market for alternative-fuel vehicles. Her first account was UTC Power, a Connecticut-based company that makes, among other things, fuel cells for cars and buses. Fuel cells run on hydrogen instead of petroleum and emit only water as waste. Depending on how the hydrogen to power them is produced, they have a promising future as a green alternative to the internal-combustion engine.

But that future, touted for decades, keeps receding. There is no market for fuel-cell vehicles because they are

If prices came down, order books might fatten, bringing prices down further, attracting new investment and still more orders, and perhaps speeding the adoption of fuel-cell technology in the broader market. And if not? Magaziner had other irons in the fire. He intended to push ahead on multiple fronts, creating a stream of "products" and letting the market decide the rest.

Another product, for example, involved buildings, not buses. Buildings are among the most profligate energy-wasters out there. For a fee, energy-service companies will upgrade your building to plug energy leaks, promising to deliver a specified level of conservation and to reimburse you for any underperformance; you can take this guarantee of future energy savings to the bank and borrow against it to finance the upgrade. The business model is elegant; but the market for these building retrofits, as they are called, remains small, only a few billion dollars a year. Low volumes keep costs high: another version of the fuel-cell problem.

The foundation made retrofits a target last year and brought in Milton Bevington to work on them. In his

Where Bill Clinton's role in the foundation ends  
and Ira Magaziner's begins is not entirely clear.  
Sometimes, to an outsider, they seem to share a brain.

expensive; they are expensive because there is no market for them. "It's the chicken-and-the-egg thing," UTC Power's Michael Brown told me recently. "You're sort of lost in this loop, and you've got to figure some way to break it." Since 2005, the company has sold only six fuel-cell-powered buses, each made by hand, each priced at more than \$2 million. When I asked Brown if UTC Power was making any money on these boutique buses, he replied, "Not enough to make us happy. Frankly, nobody's making money on fuel-cell buses." That could change if larger, regular orders began coming in. If it made 100 or so buses a year, UTC Power could deliver them at competitive prices, Brown said.

Thirumurthy and several colleagues visited company plants and brought back reams of cost data. She used it exactly as a private consultant might: to work out, component by component, where higher volumes could most effectively reduce costs. By early June, UTC Power and the Clinton Foundation had a deal: If the foundation could round up the orders, the company could cut costs and pass through the savings. In August, Magaziner said he expected cities to order enough buses—something in the hundreds—to reduce prices by half or more.

Would a few hundred fuel-cell buses matter, if cities bought them? Maybe only a little, but maybe quite a bit.

mid-50s, with a 30-year business career and training as an HVAC engineer, Bevington was an empty-nester who was casting about for a new direction and was willing to take a steep pay cut. He found energy-service companies that were eager to participate. Meanwhile, the foundation negotiated with bankers and canvassed cities.

At the cities' climate summit in May, Clinton, flanked by the mayors of New York and London and a herd of bank and energy-service-company executives, announced the result: Cities would put together bundles of buildings to retrofit; the banks would make available \$5 billion in loans, to be paid back from future energy savings. The \$5 billion, the companies say, will more than double the size of their retrofit market at a stroke. More important, as Clay Nesler, of Johnson Controls (an energy-service company), told me, working with a predictable stream of demand instead of doing scattered jobs "is a new way of doing business," one that promises new economies of scale, although how much prices will come down remains to be seen.

Clinton and Magaziner intended the May announcement merely as an opening shot. The campaign, if it succeeds, will go on for years, the script improvised as opportunities crop up. "I want to start with the low-hanging

fruit," Clinton told me. "I have no idea where this is going, but it's utterly fascinating to see if it can be done."

The modern era's predominant model for philanthropy, the grant-making foundation, is a century old. When the Rockefeller Foundation created the template, Woodrow Wilson was a new president and World War I was still a year away. Since then, the world has changed more than foundations have. In recent years, new generations have come to see the traditional approach as hidebound. "Everyone's searching for new models and new ways of doing things," Peter Frumkin, the author of the recent book *Strategic Giving: The Art and Science of Philanthropy*, told me. "There is an urge for something other than the standard model of the grant-making foundation that dutifully delivers funds to nonprofit organizations that dutifully deliver the services."

Among the most promising of the newer models is something that has come to be known as "social entrepreneurship." As the label implies, it uses entrepreneurial methods and market mechanisms to solve social problems. The paradigm is Grameen Bank, which developed a commercial market for small, zero-collateral loans to poor people in Bangladesh and now profitably lends to more than 7 million borrowers (97 percent of them women).

Although microfinance proved a triumph, the social-entrepreneurship movement has been hard-pressed to come up with a second act. Venture philanthropists have created nonprofit companies to make cheap reading glasses, hearing aids, and mosquito nets for the poor. In 2000, a nonprofit pharmaceutical company called the Institute for OneWorld Health was established to develop and market drugs for the poor. But those and many other such efforts remain small in scale. Much of the literature on social entrepreneurship is still devoted to figuring out just what social entrepreneurship is.

It is at this transitional moment that the Clinton Foundation has appeared on the philanthropic scene. The new breed of philanthropic and social entrepreneurs want to see measurable results, and soon; they embrace business and businesslike methods; they want projects to be sustainable and scalable, capable of living and growing on their own. All of that describes the Clinton-Magaziner ethic to a tee. "That's amazing," Greg Dees, of Duke University's Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship, told me when I detailed Clinton's global-warming plans. "They're trying to start entire markets in one fell swoop. It sounds like what they're doing takes this concept to a whole new level."

Clinton hopes so. As audacious as the foundation's plans for global warming are, its philanthropic aspirations are broader. "This is the kind of thing that I believe will be a critical component of all philanthropic

activity for the foreseeable future," Clinton says. "I believe that in the years ahead, the organization and expansion of public-goods markets will become one of the most important areas of philanthropy, and will be an area where philanthropy sometimes blurs into strict private enterprise."

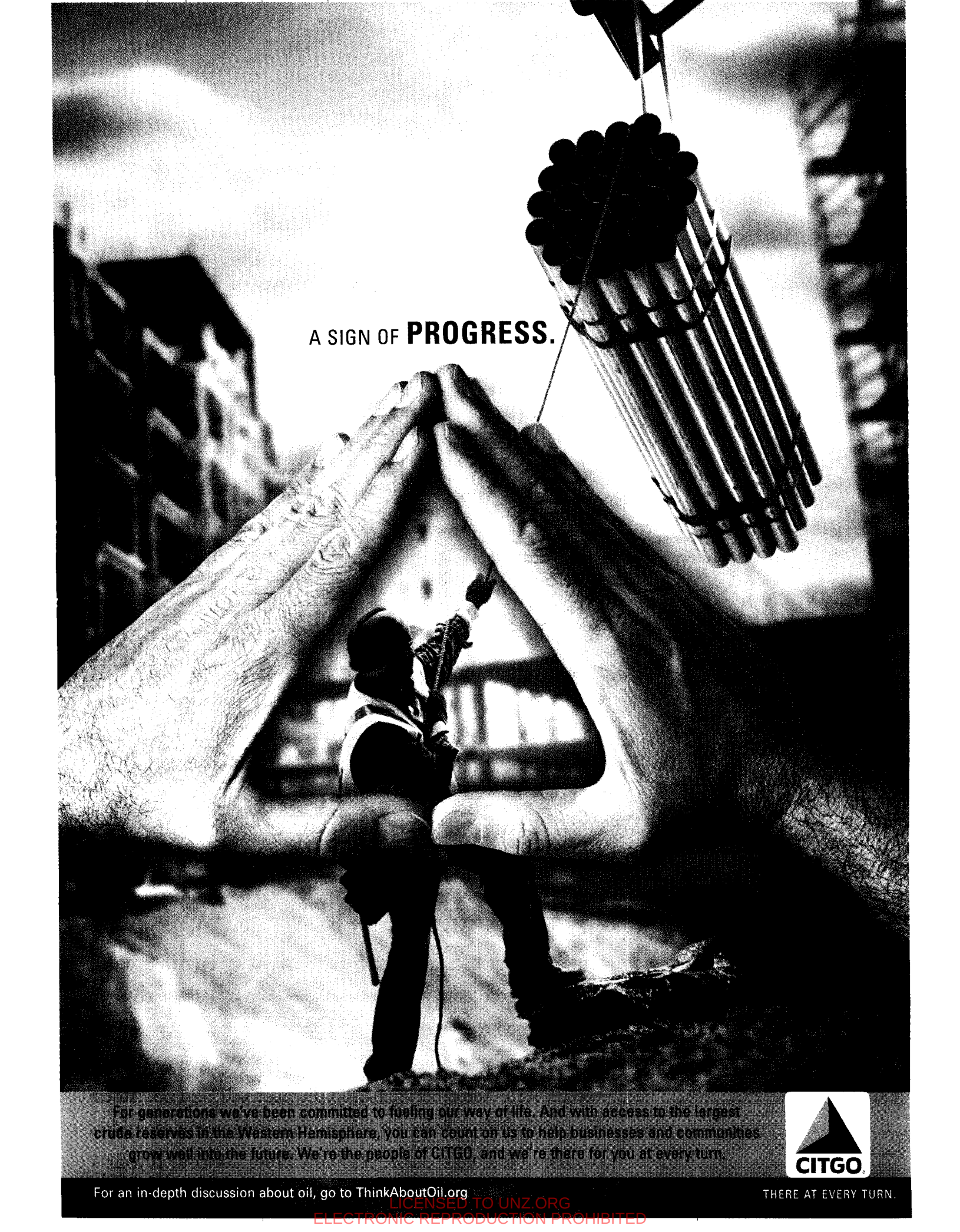
Perhaps. But to be more than a collection of one-offs, the Clinton Foundation will need to develop a method that can be applied to all kinds of problems—and by organizations that do not happen to be headed by former presidents. On the first count, Clinton has few doubts: "I think there are unlimited numbers of applications of this, where you try to organize markets for public goods and services, where you're advancing the public interest maybe entirely through private-sector activity." The foundation is currently using business methods to streamline fertilizer markets in Africa, and it plans to work on bringing down prices of desalination equipment. With the Gates Foundation, it is working on applying its methods to the market for malaria drugs, which is very different from the market for HIV drugs. Asked about future ventures, Clinton mused that solar roofs, Internet-downloaded textbooks, and bulk-purchased building supplies could bring new economies of scale to Third World education.

Knowing how well the model would work without the unique qualities of Clinton and Magaziner and their peculiar mind-meld is harder. No one doubts that elements of the Clinton strategy can be picked up by other nonprofits. Whether the whole package will be portable appears more open to doubt. It seems unlikely that anyone but a Clintonesque political celebrity could have persuaded disparate, disorganized AIDS-drug makers and governments to join hands. Clinton himself believes that other people and organizations will be able to carry the method forward once it is proven. (Although, he adds, "I don't know that anybody else could have *started* doing it, just because of the unique circumstances under which the first AIDS project arose.") He may or may not be right.

My own guess is that, however successful and replicable the Clinton strategy turns out to be, one legacy—perhaps its most important—is already assured. The foundation has employed hundreds of people and will employ hundreds more: a cadre steeped in the ethic of entrepreneurial philanthropy. Many, like Nisha Thirumurthy and Sara Greenbaum and Jamie Russell, have decades-long careers ahead of them in business, nonprofits, academia, perhaps government; all will carry with them the idea that business and philanthropy can form a seamless whole. They could seed a generation of social reformers for whom the traditional conflict between public good and private profit will seem a dusty archaism. If so, history may remember Clinton as a philanthropist who happened to have been president. ▀

Jonathan Rauch is an *Atlantic* correspondent and a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution.





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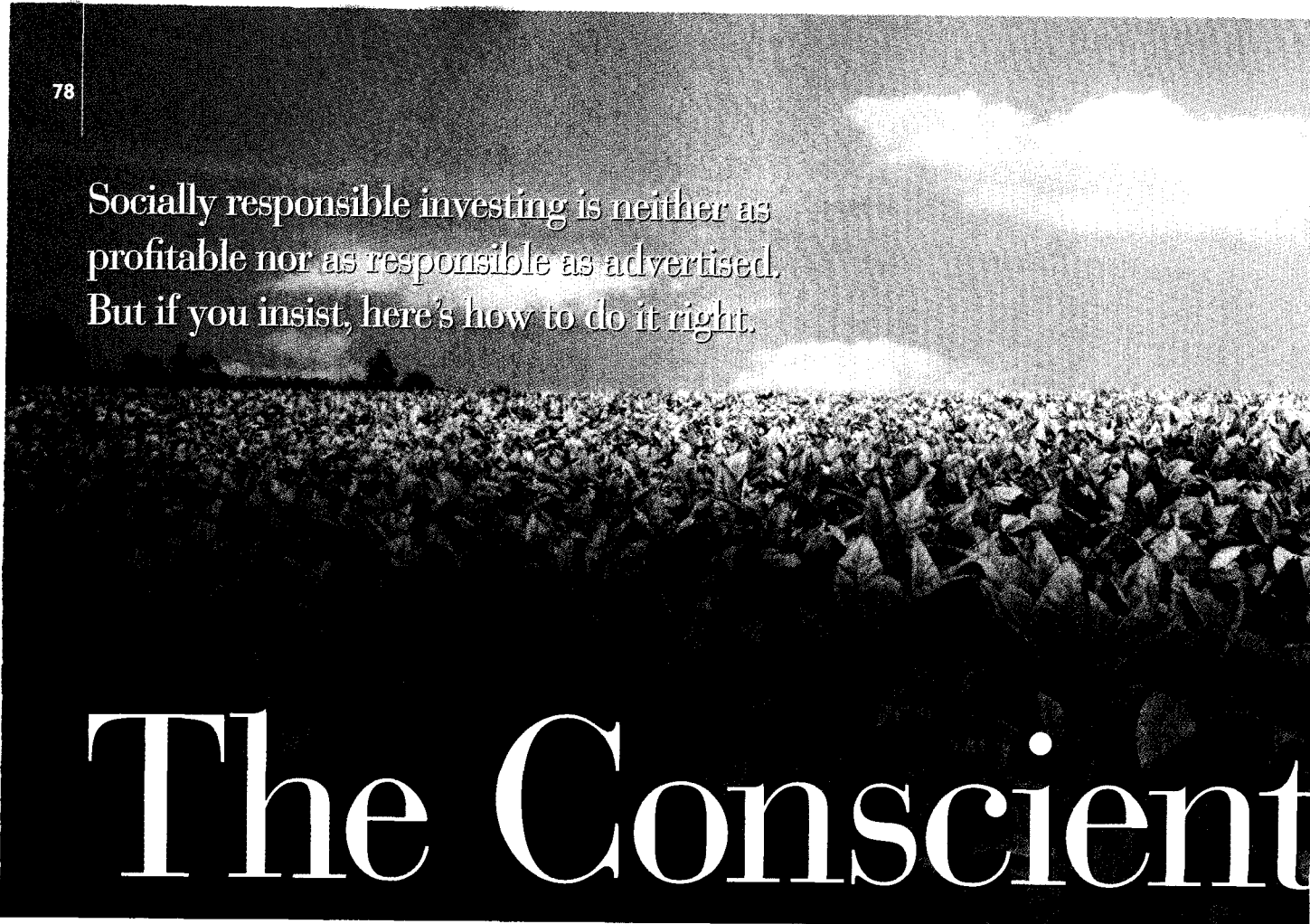


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Socially responsible investing is neither as profitable nor as responsible as advertised. But if you insist, here's how to do it right.

# The Conscient

BY HENRY BLODGET

**T**he goal of “socially responsible investing,” or SRI, is to make lucrative investment choices that have a positive impact on the world. SRI comes in many forms, but one of the most common is avoiding investments in “bad” companies. You, of course, are eager to be part of this pioneering movement that will help the environment and your fellow human beings—to do well by doing good. So let’s play a game. ¶ First, if you could go back 50 years and magically eliminate one industry from the global economy to make today’s world a better place, which would it be? Oil drilling? Handgun manufacturing? Tobacco? If you’re like most socially responsible investors, you would pick tobacco—an industry whose products sicken or kill millions of people a year and disgust almost everyone else. ¶ Second, if you could go back the same 50 years and retroactively add one stock in the Standard & Poor’s 500 to your retirement portfolio, which would it be? IBM? DuPont? Philip Morris? If your »





**FIELDS OF GREEN:** Tobacco has historically been one of the nation's most profitable—and controversial—products.

# ious Investor

goal is to generate the highest possible investment returns, the choice would be easy: tobacco giant Philip Morris—the single best-performing stock in the S&P index for the 46 years through 2003.

And therein lies the central dilemma for most socially responsible investors: Your virtue can cost you. How much would boycotting Philip Morris's stock have lost you over the past half century? As Jeremy J. Siegel has pointed out in his book *The Future for Investors*, the S&P 500 returned 10.85 percent a year from 1957 through 2003. Philip Morris, now Altria, returned 19.75 percent. Thanks to the miracle of compounding, if you had invested \$1,000 in the S&P 500 in 1957, you would have ended up with \$124,000 in 2003. If you had invested in every stock in the S&P 500 *but* Philip Morris, you would have ended up with about 5 percent less. (If you had invested the \$1,000 in *just* Philip Morris, you would have ended up with \$4.6 million—but you didn't want to know that.)

Some of our most loathsome, socially unredeeming industries have produced great investment returns. So if you're tempted to save the world by avoiding investments in "bad" companies, you might first test your commitment by answering a couple of questions. Assuming perfect foresight back in 1957, would you really have forgone 5 percent or so of your retirement nest egg just to avoid owning shares in one lousy tobacco company? Would you have forgone \$4.5 million? Be honest. And welcome to the world of socially responsible investing.

**T**he Social Investment Forum, a nonprofit group dedicated to promoting SRI, traces the roots of the modern practice to religion: specifically, to Colonial-era Quakers and Methodists avoiding companies that participated in the slave trade. In the 1950s, a mutual fund called the Pioneer Fund began avoiding "sin stocks"—those associated with gambling, smoking, and alcohol. The events of the past few decades—Vietnam, civil rights, feminism, the environmental movement, Bhopal, Chernobyl, the *Exxon Valdez*, and South Africa—brought the idea of using investment choices to influence corporate behavior into the mainstream. In recent years, a wave of corporate scandals and the sudden awareness of climate change have given the concept even greater visibility.

The Social Investment Forum's 2005 state-of-the-industry report put the amount of investor capital that was devoted to SRI at \$2.3 trillion. That is a lot of money. To put the SRI movement in perspective, however, it was only 9 percent of the total \$24.4 trillion of professionally managed assets in 2005. The forum touts the impressive growth of SRI over the past decade: That \$2.3 trillion had almost quadrupled since 1995, from \$639 billion. But most of this growth came from market appreciation rather than a great investor awakening. The value of the S&P 500 grew at about the same rate, and 1995's \$639 billion represented the same 9 percent of total assets as 2005's \$2.3 trillion did.

The majority of today's SRI assets, moreover, are managed by institutional investors, such as public-pension

funds and religious groups, rather than by individuals. Some mutual funds, a main investment vehicle for individual investors, are dedicated to investing according to SRI principles, but not a significant number. In 2005, there were 201 SRI mutual funds, managing \$179 billion in assets. This amounted to less than 10 percent of the total assets devoted to SRI, and only 4 percent of the \$4.9 trillion invested in equity mutual funds. For all the press it gets, socially responsible investing is still a niche strategy—and if not for some promising recent developments, it would likely remain that way.

The first problem with labeling a particular style of investing “socially responsible” is that it suggests that other kinds of investing are not. So it’s no wonder many people find the concept silly or offensive.

At some level, after all, our very economic system is socially problematic. The benefits accrue disproportionately to owners (investors, this means you), who make fortunes off the labor of rank-and-file employees. Luck plays a role, as does timing. Education, connections, and money give some people an edge, and hard work doesn’t always

from the industry—I have had as much cause as anyone to contemplate the moral dimensions of investing.)

In a perfect world, socially responsible investing would promote practices that improve life for everyone, not just those whose religious or personal beliefs lead them to value some products, services, and practices over others. Today’s SRI, however, has about as many definitions as it does practitioners, and not all of them serve a universal definition of “the greater good.” Peter Kinder, who runs the social-research firm KLD Research & Analytics, has defined SRI as the “incorporation of ethical, religious, social and moral values in investment decision making”—which sounds nice until you remember how much havoc different religious, social, and moral values have wrought over the years. A former chair and president of the Social Investment Forum, Steven Schueth, has a more inclusive definition: “Generally, social investors seek to own profitable companies which make positive contributions to society.” But even this raises questions. First, what’s wrong with unprofitable companies, given that almost every emerging biotech, technology, communications, and

## If you had invested \$1,000 in Philip Morris in 1957, you would have ended up with \$4.6 million in 2003— but you didn’t want to know that.

carry the day. The key to increasing profit and wealth is improving productivity, and an owner’s glee at producing the same amount with 50 workers as with 100 is not often shared by those who got canned. If you’re going to invest in *any* free-market enterprise, you’re going to have to accept that no matter how enlightened your choices, your money will be supporting wealth disparity, inequality, and other arguably unfair conditions that go hand in hand with a successful free-market economy.

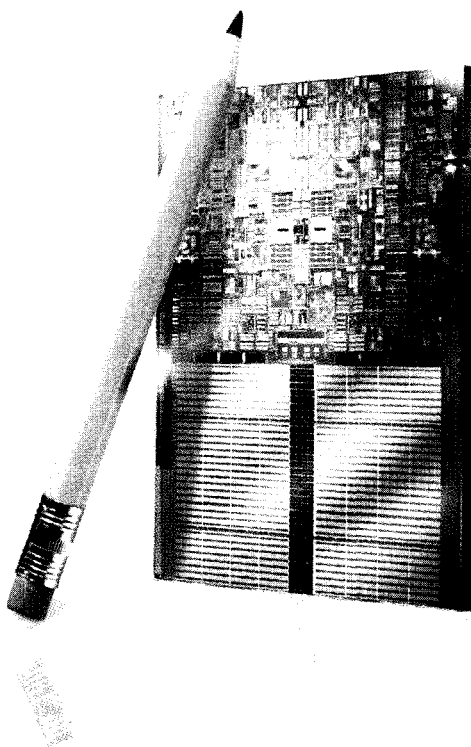
That said, all capitalism is not created equal, and investment decisions do help shape corporate behavior. If two entrepreneurs come looking for money—one who wants to burn national forests for charcoal and one who wants to power cars with seawater—the decision to finance one plan instead of the other could affect the rest of us and the planet. As a century of industrialism before the introduction of environmental and labor laws illustrated, the free market does not appropriately “price” the cost of natural resources or pollution. So the idea that responsible investment practices can be used in conjunction with intelligent regulation and consumption to serve the greater good is reasonable. The challenge comes in figuring out how best to do it. (Given my own high-profile career as a Wall Street analyst—which ended amid SEC allegations of civil securities fraud, a fine, and ejection

infrastructure company loses money? And, second, what qualifies as a “positive contribution to society”?

Despite the seeming ease with which tobacco companies can be dismissed as greedy drug pushers, even *they* do some good—providing tens of thousands of jobs, for starters. And as you move down the SRI screening list, the elimination process gets harder. Take today’s favorite SRI target: the repressive government of Sudan. Will disinvesting in any company doing business with Sudan, as many activists are calling for and many investors have already done, help stop the genocide in Darfur? Or will abrupt withdrawal of foreign capital only strengthen the Sudanese government, as other investors—including Warren Buffett—say it could?

After tobacco, the next two industries on the list are alcohol and gambling; more than half of SRI mutual funds eliminate them. Alcohol and gambling certainly cause plenty of problems. Alcohol, especially, kills, maims, screws up families, and turns customers into addicts and occasionally into murderers. (Car companies provide the vehicles for most booze-addled killings, but no SRI fund that I’m aware of screens out car companies.) On the other hand, would you really want the winery that produces your favorite pinot noir to go bankrupt? The tens of millions of people who jet to Las Vegas each year might tell





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their pastors that the Luxor is evil, but it's hard to believe they (or their pastors) never intend to go back.

Companies in the weapons and defense business are shunned by almost half of SRI mutual funds. This presumably means that besides objecting to unjust wars, handgun rampages, and drive-by shootings, the funds' customers also believe that society would be better off without armed forces or hunting. The next three criteria—environmental impact, labor practices, and product and service quality (including safety)—involve true social responsibility, so it is a pity they are so far down the screening list. Based on rankings alone, far more SRI investors avoid tobacco companies than worry about the abuse of the environment, employees, and consumers.

The rest of the mainstream SRI screening criteria focus on community impact and on workplace diversity. Human rights, faith-based considerations, pornography, and animal testing are considered “specialty-use” screens and are applied by a minority of SRI funds. Less than a quarter of funds screen on such factors as abortion, health-care/biotech/medical ethics, “antifamily” entertainment and lifestyle (don't ask), and excessive executive compensation.

The main problem with eliminating “objectionable” companies is that “objectionable” is in the eye of the beholder. The other drawback, one that probably deters more people from pursuing the strategy than would say so, is the likelihood of lower returns. By eliminating whole industries from their portfolios, negative screeners reduce their diversification and risk losing out on gains. Not coincidentally—because free markets are, to a large extent, self-correcting—the more “objectionable” an industry, the higher its future returns may be. Bad publicity and lawsuits tend to depress stock prices, and the lower prices set them up for strong future returns. Companies can address objections to many practices by improving labeling, cleaning up manufacturing processes, revising policies, or just getting out of controversial lines of business. Once the changes have been made, their stocks often play catch-up—leaving investors who boycotted them in the dust.

Fortunately, avoiding “bad” companies is not the only way to practice SRI. The discipline has evolved to include “positive” screening, through which investors seek “good” companies; shareholder activism, through which investors try to effect change instead of just passively holding shares; and community development, through which investors inject capital into regions or causes that otherwise would be starved for it. Screening, both negative and positive, is still by far the most prevalent form of SRI, but shareholder activism and community development are growing rapidly. According to the Social Investment Forum, of the \$2.3 trillion in total SRI assets in 2005, 68 percent was

based on screening, 26 percent on shareholder activism, 5 percent on screening and activism, and 1 percent on community investing.

Positive screening addresses some of the shortcomings of its negative counterpart, but it also creates a few of its own. Positive screeners do not exclude whole industries but instead search within them to find the notably responsible companies. The Dow Jones Sustainability World Index, for example, screens 2,500 of the world's largest companies to find the top 10 percent based on multiple social, environmental, and economic criteria. The criteria vary by industry, and include such factors as climate-change strategies, energy consumption, corporate governance, labor practices, and stakeholder relations. The index consists of a broadly diversified global portfolio, and its performance has been similar to one (but not all) of the major unscreened indexes in the eight years since it was introduced.

The methods for choosing “good” companies are still highly subjective. Screening criteria must be selected and ranked in terms of importance, and each company must be scored on dozens of complex attributes, often using imperfect or incomplete information. (Did you visit that factory in Vietnam to make sure your favorite sneaker maker isn't employing 4-year-old slaves, or did you just take the company's word for it? Did the *company* visit every one of its suppliers' factories? How do you know?) The inherently subjective judgments, combined with the reality that most companies are sinful in some areas and saintly in others, lead some observers to call such rankings absurd. Warren Buffett is one. “I don't know how I would rate Exxon versus Chevron versus BP,” the *Los Angeles Times* recently quoted him as saying. “It's very difficult to judge the actions of companies that act on thousands of things every day ... It's ridiculous when people say one major oil company is more ‘pure’ than another.”

Another challenge of positive screening is that beauty may be only skin-deep. As corporate social responsibility has gone mainstream, companies have spotted a juicy marketing and PR opportunity, and corporate America is now falling all over itself to show how enlightened it is. This has made the screening process even more difficult, requiring investors to dig deep. Don't fall for those heartwarming hybrid ads until you're sure the car company isn't also lobbying against emission reductions.

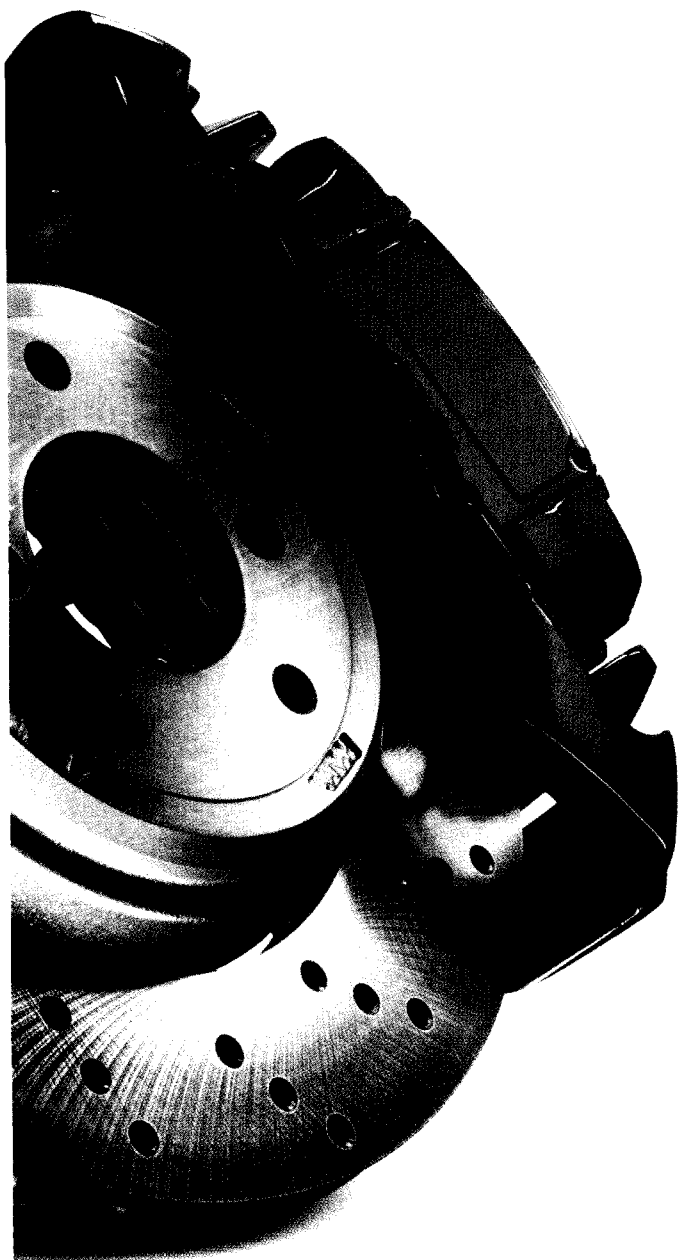
Most large SRI firms use both positive and negative screens, but their choices vary so much that what they do is less about “socially responsible investing” than about their managers' personal preferences. The social-research firm KLD, for example, targets tobacco, booze, weapons, gambling, and nuclear power, and then winnows the surviving companies with a responsible-practices screen. The mutual-fund company Calvert is open to nuclear power in some cases, but always abhors gambling. And

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the my-SRI-is-holier-than-yours crowd doesn't hesitate to bash firms with different priorities: Domini Social Investments gets criticized for not axing companies involved in abortion and porn; Calvert has been dissed for tolerating companies that move production overseas. (To anyone who has a basic understanding of economics and isn't running for office, this last criticism is ridiculous. Companies have been outsourcing forever—and must, if they want to stay competitive. Our economy, meanwhile, has always created more jobs than it has lost.)

**T**he next major category of SRI, shareholder activism, is more promising than any form of screening, at least for big institutional investors. According to the Social Investment Forum, about a third of today's SRI investors (institutions and mutual funds rather than individuals—unfortunately, it's hard to try this at home) seek to influence the behavior of companies through either formal proxy votes or informal talks with management. Forcing change through the proxy process is difficult. The

through 2005, and found that on the day they were added to the CalPERS "focus list," the firms outperformed the broader market. Barber estimates that over the 14 years of his study this superior (very) short-run performance created a total of \$3.1 billion of additional market value. That sounds great, but you need to understand what it means. The day CalPERS published its annual list of target companies, the stock prices of those companies jumped, as other investors read the names and immediately placed buy orders. Whether the buyers bought because they expected that CalPERS's activism would create long-term value or because they thought that the announcement would drive up the price is impossible to determine; the answer is probably both. Because these gains came only on the day the CalPERS list was published, ordinary investors would have had to be paying very close attention to capture them. Meanwhile, the incremental long-term returns that have accrued so far are hard to link definitively to CalPERS's activism. The good news is that Barber believes that the long-term returns of activism like this could be enormous.

## All this said, socially responsible investing certainly deserves to go mainstream. Capital-allocation decisions can help shape behavior.

time and expense required, combined with the tendency of most investors to rubber-stamp management recommendations, means that most shareholder resolutions fail. Sometimes just the threat of a proxy fight is enough to prod managers into constructive talks. But the threat will be taken more seriously if you own 3 million shares than if you own a few hundred. (This isn't always true. A "dissident" Yahoo shareholder named Eric Jackson recently used a combo of moxie, marketing, and social networking to embarrass Yahoo's overpaid, feckless managers, and he may have played a part in Yahoo CEO Terry Semel's departure. Jackson has since trained his Internet flame-thrower on Edward Zander, the CEO of Motorola. A few more successes, and he might launch a new era of shareholder democracy.) A 2004 rule requiring mutual funds to disclose their proxy-voting records has prompted even traditionally passive investors to get more active, lest they be publicly shamed for supporting egregious policies.

Unlike mere screening, activism has in some studies been shown to help deliver superior returns. Some large investors have taken an even more aggressive stance, making activism part of their investment processes. CalPERS, California's public-pension system, is a notable example. A professor at the University of California at Davis, Brad Barber, studied the returns of companies that CalPERS targeted for shareholder activism from 1992

Like screening, shareholder activism has problems, one of which is free riders. CalPERS is a massive asset manager—responsible for a total portfolio of nearly \$200 billion in 2005—and it collectively owns about 0.5 percent of the U.S. equity market, according to Barber. As a result, the value it creates through shareholder activism accrues not only to its own shareholders but also to the great lazy majority of investors, who get additional returns for nothing. Of the \$224 million a year in short-term gains that Barber says the pension system has generated through its activism, he estimates that only \$1.12 million a year accrued directly to state employees whose retirement savings are managed by CalPERS. The rest went to couch potatoes, hedge funds, and other slugabed tagalongs, some of whom no doubt bought the pension system's "focus stocks" the day the list was released and jubilantly flipped them the next. The gains for CalPERS translate to only 0.07 percent of incremental performance on the fund's portfolio. Although the pension system's activism may help the companies it targets as well as those companies' other shareholders, CalPERS itself won't benefit if the cost of its activism exceeds its gains. This is an unfortunate paradox that is, or should be, important to most asset managers.

Significantly, Barber draws a distinction between efforts by CalPERS to improve corporate governance and



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shareholder rights, and its occasional forays into more-traditional SRI concerns—dropping tobacco stocks from its portfolio, for example, has cost CalPERS \$633 million so far. Its screening efforts, in Barber's opinion, also create a conflict of interest between its management and its investors—the state employees, who may have different social priorities (the “eye of the beholder” problem). If institutions want to avoid “bad” companies, Barber says, they should make sure their shareholders agree that the companies they single out are bad. They should also make sure that their screening decisions have been empirically shown to improve investment returns—which tobacco-company elimination most emphatically has not.

The final category of SRI investing, which encompasses only 1 percent of SRI assets, is community development. Here the goal is to direct capital to underserved communities via banks, credit unions, loan funds, venture-capital funds, microfinance, and other vehicles. Though still small, community-investment efforts, according to the Social Investment Forum, have helped Native Americans buy back ancestral lands and start businesses, restored salmon and trout to the Chinook watershed in Washington state, created affordable housing and high schools in Boston, provided microfinancing in Bangladesh, and funded AIDS prevention.

But let's get back to the heart of the matter. As much as SRI investors say that their goal is to support socially responsible practices, the real priority, as for nearly all other investors, is returns. One survey suggests that 80 percent of SRI mutual-fund investors would not buy SRI funds unless they produced returns equal to or higher than conventional funds. Unfortunately, these investors may be delusional. As with mutual funds, most SRI funds produce lower returns, after adjusting for risk, investment costs, and other factors, than low-cost index funds would.

After examining the performance of several indexes of socially approved stocks from 1990 through 2004, Meir Statman, of Santa Clara University, found that the returns of the social indexes were generally higher than those of their conventional counterparts, but that the differences were not statistically significant. (Translation: The performance might have been the result of luck.) The SRI stocks were also more volatile than the market overall, and this, according to finance theory, suggests that the higher returns were earned in exchange for higher risk. In any case, investors can't buy indexes, they can only buy funds, and most socially responsible funds come with costs that basic index funds don't: expensive portfolio managers, analysts, and research. For example, according to Statman's study, Domini's index of 400 socially responsible stocks beat the S&P 500 index from 1990 through 2004. But owing, most likely, to the high cost of

social-investing research, the Domini *fund* lagged Vanguard's flagship S&P 500 index fund. (It costs money to make sure that a chemical company isn't dumping poison in the lake. And just because your portfolio manager is socially responsible doesn't mean he wants to putter around town in a secondhand Ford while his hedge-fund buddies are driving BMWs.)

There is some good news. Recent studies have found some evidence of a link between socially responsible corporate policies and superior stock returns, at least over the past decade. Alex Edmans, of the University of Pennsylvania, found that from 1998 to 2005, the stocks of employee-friendly companies (as determined by *Fortune's* annual “Best Companies to Work For” list) earned twice the rate of return of the market overall. Other studies have suggested that companies with poor eco-efficiency records do less well than their more environmentally conscientious peers, and that the stocks of companies with strong corporate governance did better than average in the 1990s.

Not surprisingly, SRI advocates seize on such research as evidence that you can do well by doing good. But relationships that seem causal and permanent in one market era often vanish in the next, taking many “superior investment strategies” down with them. Today's markets are also annoyingly efficient. The more studies that demonstrate that socially responsible stocks do better than regular stocks, the more investors will rush to buy them (and not just for “the greater good”). The resulting torrent of money flowing into the stocks will drive up their prices, and the higher prices will pave the way for subpar future returns.

In discussing how investor expectations could shape the market, Statman suggests that “doing well while doing good” is possible if enough “*investors consistently underestimate the benefits of being socially responsible or overestimate its costs* [italics mine].” One can always hope, in other words, to get the best of both worlds—responsible practices and superior returns. But finance theory suggests that this hope will stay just what it is now: wishful thinking.

The best news about SRI, and the key to its improving not only mainstream corporate behavior but also investment returns, is that it encourages investors to think like owners instead of renters or gamblers. If you invest the time to analyze a company's business practices—or, better yet, to change them—chances are you will be more committed to the company's stock than if you were just looking for a quick score. Why does this matter? Because perhaps the most return-reducing habit for most investors is frequent trading. (This, by the way, is true whether you are a professional portfolio manager running \$10 billion or a CNBC-watching dentist running \$10,000. Trading is hazardous to your



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wealth.) Mutual-fund investors, especially, tend to buy at peaks and sell at troughs, thus generating returns that fall far short of what they would have earned if they had just bought and held. Investors who do less trading usually make fewer timing mistakes and rack up lower transaction costs than average traders. Staying put, for whatever reason, is usually rewarded.

Most investors' obsession with short-term results has another regrettable, and oft-lamented, effect: It encourages company managers to focus on short-term performance at the expense of the long term. In the short term, socially responsible labor and environmental policies can be expensive, so executives who care about this year's bonus (and who doesn't?) would be crazy if they bothered to implement them. It is easy to blame companies for this shortsightedness. But the problem often originates with investors, for many of whom a one-to-two-year time horizon is synonymous with eternity.

The flaws and challenges that have confined SRI to a niche strategy in the past reveal the key to expanding its influence going forward. To be meaningful, any analysis of a company's practices must be painstaking and deep, and screening decisions must be made on objective criteria that others can assess for themselves. Investments must be made for the long term—several years at a minimum and preferably decades—because any incremental value created by sustainable policies (rather than by publication on a CalPERS focus list) will likely take years to be realized. Investors should be active partners in a company's development, sponsoring or supporting referenda or participating in discussions with management—or they should draft behind shareholders who are. And as in all intelligent investing, price must be taken into account. Even if a company's practices are downright saintly, and even if the saintly practices may help the company deliver superior earnings—far from proven—you won't benefit if the value of such practices was already reflected in the stock's price when you bought it. (A Porsche is only a great deal when it is priced like a Volkswagen. Otherwise it's just a great car—and priced like one.) Lastly, because companies and stocks that satisfy these criteria will likely be few and far between, you will have to live with the risks as well as the potential rewards of limiting your portfolio to a handful of stocks, instead of holding a diversified basket of hundreds.

One firm that embraces an enlightened SRI methodology is Generation Investment Management, founded by former Goldman Sachs partner David Blood, former Vice President Al Gore, and others. The firm's portfolio is highly concentrated—30 to 50 companies—and the partners seek to make "sustainable" long-term investments, meaning investments in companies that pay careful attention to both human and environmental resources

without sacrificing returns. Whether they can achieve this remains to be seen. As with the larger Dow Jones sustainability index, the firm's focus is on environmental and ethical sustainability rather than on social responsibility, and thus it avoids some of the subjective hazards of negative screening—some.

Ever the evangelist, Gore has begun preaching the virtues of sustainable investing. He is fond of noting that our Keynesian accounting systems assume that the world's resources, including human capital, are infinite. "We are operating the Earth like it is a business in liquidation," he says. Gore argues that as the world's citizens begin to see the light, markets will begin to disproportionately reward companies that behave responsibly. "Your employees, your colleagues, your board, your investors, your customers," he said in an interview with *The McKinsey Quarterly*, "are all soon going to place a much higher value—and the markets will soon place a much higher value—on an assessment of how much you are a part of the solution to these issues."

One implication of this argument—invest sustainably, and you'll make a killing—is just dreaming. Even if the markets do soon "place a much higher value" on responsible companies, this won't provide superior returns over the long term; rather, it will provide a pleasant short-term bump. Once stock prices have adjusted, the opportunity will evaporate. Investment decisions, moreover, will still be only one factor in changing corporate behavior. Regulatory practices and consumer buying choices will always play the most direct role in persuading companies to behave responsibly.

All this said, socially responsible investing certainly deserves to go mainstream. Capital-allocation decisions *can* help shape behavior. Even with different investors emphasizing different priorities, there is usually some common ground. And we need to stop insisting that SRI should be both socially *and* financially superior to traditional alternatives. It is unlikely to be both, and understanding the trade-offs it requires will have to become a part of how we lead our lives. Organic milk costs more than regular milk—and continues to fly off the shelves. Hybrid cars cost more than regular cars, and we continue to rave about them. For a variety of reasons—some well-founded, some not—we feel good about the trade-off. Specifically, we feel that we are doing the right thing.

A lifetime of investing in SRI funds might cost you a lot more than organic milk and hybrid cars. But as SRI investors become both cannier and more numerous, the sacrifice involved need not amount to the 5 percent you might have lost by boycotting Philip Morris. Perhaps, even if SRI returns are no higher than can be achieved through traditional investing—or even a bit less—the practice can be its own reward. ■

Henry Blodget, a former stock analyst, is the author of *The Wall Street Self-Defense Manual: A Consumer's Guide to Investing* (2007).



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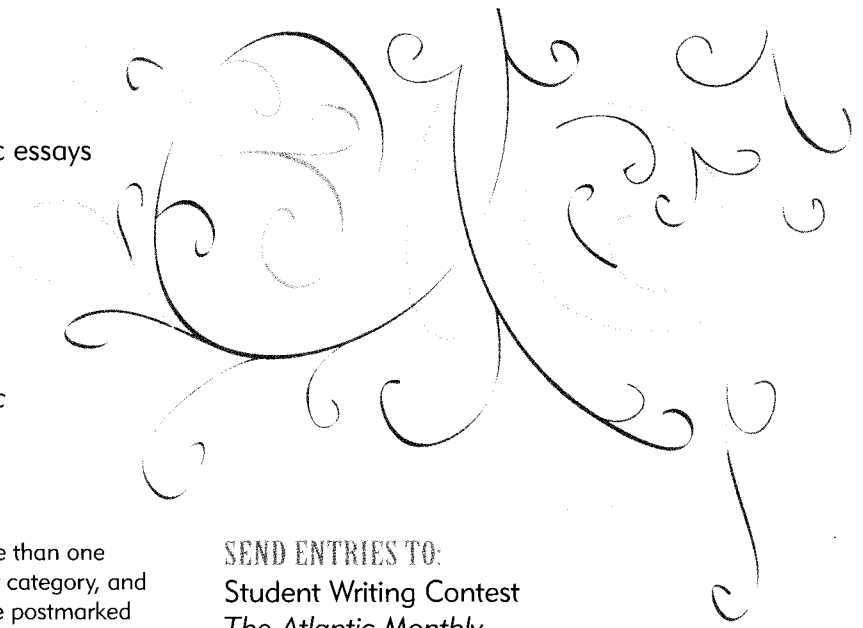
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It's easy to see how evolution can account for the dark streaks in human nature—the violence, treachery, and cruelty. But how does it produce kindness, generosity, and heroism?

BY OLIVIA JUDSON

# The Selfless Gene

At 2 a.m. on February 26, 1852, the Royal Navy troopship *Birkenhead*, which was carrying more than 600 people, including seven women and 13 children, struck a rock near Danger Point, two miles off the coast of South Africa. Almost immediately, the ship began to break up. Just three lifeboats could be launched. The men were ordered to stand on deck, and they did. The women and children (along with a few sailors) were put into the lifeboats and rowed away. Only then were the men told that they could try to save themselves by swimming to shore. Most drowned or were eaten by sharks. ¶ The heroism of the troops, standing on deck facing almost certain death while others escaped, became the stuff of legend. But the strange thing is, such heroics are not rare: Humans often risk their »

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he blew himself up while making explosives. He died in 2000, at age 63, after an illness contracted while undertaking another risky endeavor: a trip to the Congo to collect chimpanzee feces. When I first met him, in Oxford in 1991, he had a terrific shock of white hair, rode a rickety bicycle at prodigious speed, and was preoccupied with the question of why sex is useful in evolutionary terms. (For my doctorate, I worked with him on this question.) But he began his career studying social behavior, and in the early '60s he published a trio of now-classic papers in which he offered the first rigorous explanation of how generosity can evolve, and under what circumstances it is likely to emerge.

Hamilton didn't call it generosity, though; he called it altruism. And the particular behaviors he sought to explain are acts of extreme self-sacrifice, such as when a bee dies to defend the hive, or when an animal spends its whole life helping others rear their children instead of having some of its own.

To see why these behaviors appear mysterious to biologists, consider how natural selection works. In every generation, some individuals leave more descendants than others. If the reason for their greater "reproductive success" is due to the particular genes they have, then natural selection has been operating.

Here's an example: Suppose you're a mosquito living on the French Mediterranean coast. Tourists don't like mosquitoes, and the French authorities try to keep the tourists happy by spraying insecticide. Which means that on the coast, mosquitoes bearing a gene that confers insecticide resistance tend to leave many more descendants than those lacking it—and so today's coastal mosquitoes are far more resistant to insecticide than those that live inland.

Extreme altruists, by definition, leave no descendants: They're too busy helping others. So at first blush, a gene that promotes extreme altruism should quickly vanish from a population.

Hamilton's solution to this problem was simple and elegant. He realized that a gene promoting extreme altruism could spread if the altruist helped its close relations. The reason is that your close relations have some of the

lives for strangers—think of the firemen going into the World Trade Center—or for people they know but are not related to.

How does a propensity for self-sacrifice evolve? And what about the myriad lesser acts of daily kindness—helping a little old lady across the street, giving up a seat on the subway, returning a wallet that's been lost? Are these impulses as primal as ferocity, lust, and greed? Or are they just a thin veneer over a savage nature? Answers come from creatures as diverse as amoebas and baboons, but the story starts in the county of Kent, in southern England.

### EVOLVING GENEROSITY

Kent has been home to two great evolutionary biologists. In the 19th century, Charles Darwin lived for many years in the village of Downe. In the 20th, William Donald Hamilton grew up catching beetles and chasing butterflies over the rolling hills near Badgers Mount.

Hamilton was a tall man with a craggy face and the tops of a couple of fingers missing from a childhood accident—

same genes as you do. In humans and other mammals, full brothers and sisters have, on average, half the same genes. First cousins have, on average, an eighth of their genes in common. Among insects such as ants and bees, where the underlying genetics work differently, full sisters (but not brothers) typically have three-quarters of their genes in common.

Hamilton derived a formula—now known as Hamilton's rule—for predicting whether the predisposition toward a given altruistic act is likely to evolve:  $rB > C$ . In plain language, this says that genes that promote the altruistic act will spread if the benefit ( $B$ ) that the act bestows is high enough, and the genetic relationship ( $r$ ) between the altruist and the beneficiary is close enough, to outweigh the act's cost ( $C$ ) to the altruist. Cost and benefit are both measured in nature's currency: children. "Cheap" behaviors—such as when a small bird squawks from the bushes to announce it's seen a cat or a hawk—can, and do, evolve easily, even though they often benefit non-relatives. "Expensive" behaviors, such as working your whole life to rear someone else's children, evolve only in the context of close kin.

Since Hamilton first proposed the idea, "kin selection" has proved tremendously powerful as a way to understand cooperative and self-sacrificial behavior in a huge menagerie of animals. Look at lions. Lionesses live with their sisters, cousins, and aunts; they hunt together and help each other with child care. Bands of males, meanwhile, are typically brothers and half-brothers. Large bands are better able to keep a pride of lionesses; thus even males who never mate with a female still spread some of their genes by helping their brothers defend the pride. Or take peacocks. Males often stand in groups when they display to females. This is because females are drawn to groups of displaying males; they ogle them, then pick the guy they like best to be their mate. Again, peacocks prefer to display with their brothers rather than with males they are not related to.

Kin selection operates even in mindless creatures such as amoebas. For instance, the soil-dwelling amoeba *Dictyostelium purpureum*. When times are good, members of this species live as single cells, reproducing asexually and feasting on bacteria. But when times get tough—when there's a bacteria shortage—thousands of individuals join together into a single entity known as a slug. This glides off in search of more-suitable conditions. When it finds them, the slug transforms itself into a fruiting body that looks like a tiny mushroom; some of the amoebas become the stalk, others become spores. Those in the stalk will die; only the spores will go on to form the next amoeboid generation. Sure enough, amoebas with the same genes (in other words, clones) tend to join the same slugs: They avoid mixing with genetic strangers and sacrifice themselves only for their clones.

Kin selection also accounts for some of the nastier features of human behavior, such as the tendency step-parents have to favor their own children at the expense of their stepkids. But it's not enough to explain the evolution of all aspects of social behavior, in humans or in other animals.

## LIVING TOGETHER

Animals may begin to live together for a variety of reasons—most obviously, safety in numbers. In one of his most engaging papers, Hamilton observed that a tight flock, herd, or shoal will readily appear if every animal tries to make itself safer by moving into the middle of the group—a phenomenon he termed the "selfish herd." But protection from predators isn't the only benefit of bunching together. A bird in a flock spends more time eating and less time looking about for danger than it does when on its own. Indeed, eating well is another common reason for group living. Some predatory animals—chimpanzees, spotted hyenas, and wild dogs, for example—have evolved to hunt together.

Many social animals thus live in huge flocks or herds, and not in family groups—or even if the nexus of social life is the family, the family group is itself part of a larger community. In species such as these, social behavior must extend beyond a simple "Be friendly and helpful to your family and hostile to everybody else" approach to the world. At the least, the evolution of social living requires limiting aggression so that neighbors can tolerate each other. And often, the evolution of larger social groupings is accompanied by an increase in the subtlety and complexity of the ways animals get along together.

Consider baboons. Baboons are monkeys, not apes, and are thus not nearly as closely related to us as chimpanzees are. Nonetheless, baboons have evolved complex social lives. They live in troops that can number from as few as eight to as many as 200. Females live with their sisters, mothers, aunts, and infants; males head off to find a new troop at adolescence (around age 4). Big troops typically contain several female family groups, along with some adult males. The relationships between members of a troop are varied and complex. Sometimes two or more males team up to defeat a dominant male in combat. Females often have a number of male "friends" that they associate with (friends may or may not also be sex partners). If a female is attacked or harassed, her friends will come bounding to the rescue; they will also protect her children, play with them, groom them, carry them, and sometimes share food with them. If the mother dies, they may even look after an infant in her place.

Yet friendliness and the associated small acts of affection and kindness—a bout of grooming here, a shared bite to eat there—seem like evolutionary curiosities. Small



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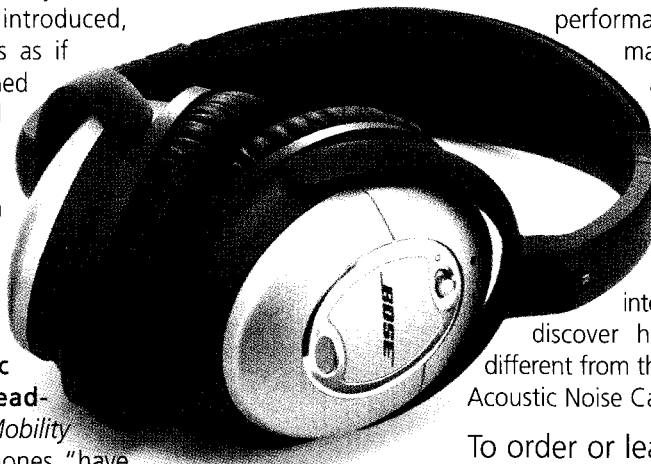
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gestures like these don't affect how many children you have. Or do they?

Among social animals, one potentially important cause of premature death is murder. Infanticide can be a problem for social mammals, from baboons and chimpanzees to lions and even squirrels. During one four-year study of Belding's ground squirrels, for example, the main cause of death for juveniles was other Belding's ground squirrels; at least 8 percent of the young were murdered before being weaned. Similarly, fighting between adults—particularly in species where animals are well armed with horns, tusks, or teeth—can be lethal, and even if it is not, it may result in severe injuries, loss of status, or eviction from the group.

The possibility of death by murder creates natural selection for traits that reduce this risk. For example, any animal that can appease an aggressor, or that knows when to advance and when to retreat, is more likely to leave descendants than an animal that leaps wildly into any fray. Which explains why, in many social-mammal species, you don't see many murders, though you do see males engaging in elaborate rituals to see who's bigger and stronger. Serious physical fights tend to break out only when both animals think they can win (that is, when they are about the same size).

Thus, among animals such as baboons, friendships mean more than a bit of mutual scratching; they play a fundamental role in an animal's ability to survive and reproduce within the group. Friendships between males can be important in overcoming a dominant male—which may in turn lead to an improvement in how attractive the animals are to females. Similarly, females that have a couple of good male friends will be more protected from bullying—and their infants less likely to be killed. Why do the males do it? Males that are friends with a particular female are more likely to become her sex partners later on, if indeed they are not already. In other words, friendship may be as primal an urge as ferocity.

#### BECOMING HUMAN

**T**he lineage that became modern humans split off from the lineage that became chimpanzees around 6 million years ago. Eventually this new lineage produced the most socially versatile animal the planet has ever seen: us. How did we get to be this way?

One clue comes from chimpanzees. Chimpanzee society is the mirror image of baboon society, in that it's the females that leave home at adolescence, and the males that stay where they were born. Chimpanzee communities can also be fairly large, comprising several different sub-communities and family groups. Males prefer to associate with their brothers and half-brothers on their mother's side, but they also have friendships with unrelated males. Friends hang out together and hunt together—and gang up on other males.

However, unlike baboon troops, which roam around the savannah freely intermingling, chimpanzee communities are territorial. Bands of males patrol the edges of their community's territory looking for strangers—and sometimes make deep incursions into neighboring terrain. Males on patrol move together in silence, often stopping to listen. If they run into a neighboring patrol, there may be some sort of skirmish, which may or may not be violent. But woe betide a lone animal that runs into the patrolling males. If they encounter a strange male on his own, they may well kill him. And sometimes, repeated and violent attacks by one community lead to the annihilation of another, usually smaller, one. Indeed, two of the three most-studied groups of chimpanzees have wiped out a neighboring community.

Chimpanzees have two important sources of premature death at the hands of other chimpanzees: They may be murdered by members of their own community, or they may be killed during encounters with organized bands of hostile neighbors.

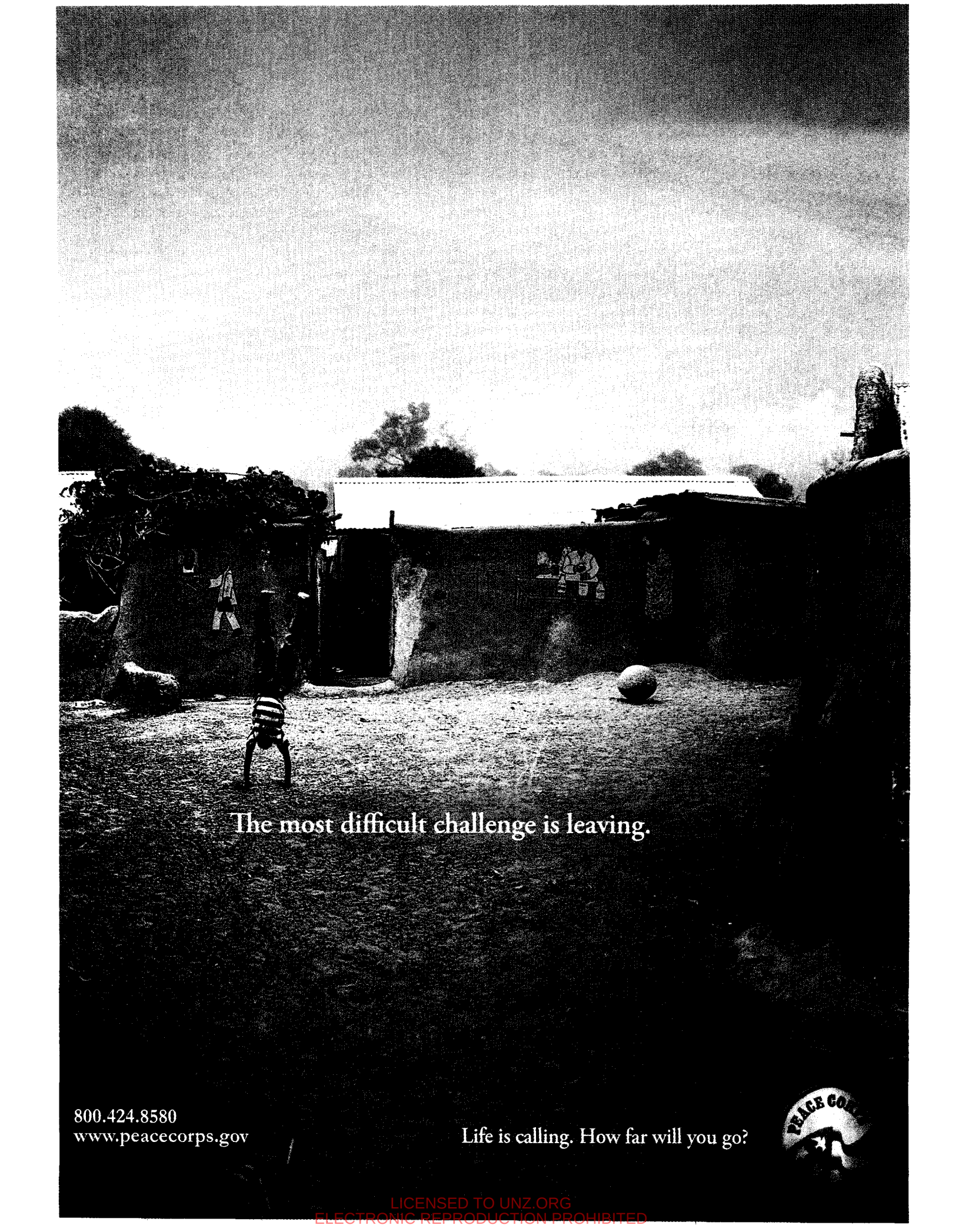
Just like humans. Except that humans aren't armed with big teeth and strong limbs. Humans carry weapons, and have done so for thousands of years.

#### ON LOVE AND WAR

**D**arwin wondered whether lethal warring between neighboring groups might have caused humans to evolve to be more helpful and kind to each other. At first, the idea seems paradoxical. But Darwin thought this could have happened if the more cohesive, unified, caring groups had been better able to triumph over their more disunited rivals. If so, the members of those cohesive, yet warlike, groups would have left more descendants.

For a long time, the idea languished. Why? A couple of reasons. First, it appears to depend on "group selection." This is the idea that some groups evolve characteristics that allow them to outcompete other groups, and it's long been out of favor with evolutionary biologists. In general, natural selection works much more effectively on individuals than it does on groups, unless the groups are composed of close kin. That's because group selection can be effective only when the competing groups are genetically distinct. Members of a kin group tend to be genetically similar to each other, and different from members of other kin groups. In contrast, groups composed of non-kin tend to contain considerable genetic variation, and differences between such groups are generally much smaller. Moreover, contact between the groups—individuals migrating from one to another, say—will reduce any genetic differences that have started to accumulate. So unless natural selection within the groups is different—such that what it takes to survive and reproduce in one group is different from what it takes in another—migration quickly homogenizes the genetics of the whole population.





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A second reason Darwin's idea has been ignored is that it seems to have a distasteful corollary. The idea implies, perhaps, that some unpleasant human characteristics—such as xenophobia or even racism—evolved in tandem with generosity and kindness. Why? Because banding together to fight means that people must be able to tell the difference between friends (who belong in the group) and foes (who must be fought). In the mid-1970s, in a paper that speculated about how humans might have evolved, Hamilton suggested that xenophobia might be innate. He was pilloried.

But times have changed. Last year, the science journal *Nature* published a paper that tested the idea of “parochial altruism”—the notion that people might prefer to help strangers from their own ethnic group over strangers from a different group; the experiment found that indeed they do. In addition, the idea that natural selection might work on groups—at least in particular and narrow circumstances—has become fashionable again. And so Darwin's idea about the evolution of human kindness as a result of war has been dusted off and scrutinized.

Sam Bowles, an economist turned evolutionary biologist who splits his time between the Santa Fe Institute, in New Mexico, and the University of Siena, in Italy, notes that during the last 90,000 years of the Pleistocene Epoch (from about 100,000 years ago until about 10,000 years ago, when agriculture emerged), the human population hardly grew. One reason for this was the extraordinary climactic volatility of the period. But another, Bowles suggests, was that our ancestors were busy killing each other in wars. Working from archaeological records and ethnographic studies, he estimates that wars between different groups could have accounted for a substantial fraction of human deaths—perhaps as much as 15 percent, on average, of those born in any given year—and as such, represented a significant source of natural selection.

Bowles shows that groups of supercooperative, altruistic humans could indeed have wiped out groups of less-united folk. However, his argument works only if the cooperative groups also had practices—such as monogamy and the sharing of food with other group members—that reduced the ability of their selfish members to out-reproduce their more generous members. (Monogamy helps the spread of altruism because it reduces the differences in the number of children that different people have. If, instead, one or two males monopolized all the females in the group, any genes involved in altruism would quickly disappear.) In other words, Bowles argues that a genetic predisposition for altruism would have been far more likely to evolve in groups where disparities and discord inside the group—whether over mates or food—would have been relatively low. Cultural differences between groups would then allow genetic differences to accumulate.

## ‘THAT’S NOT THE WAY YOU DO IT’

If Bowles's analysis is right, it suggests that individuals who could not conform, or who were disruptive, would have weakened the whole group; any group that failed to drive out such people, or kill them, would have been more likely to be overwhelmed in battle. Conversely, people who fit in—sharing the food they found, joining in hunting, helping to defend the group, and so on—would have given their group a collective advantage, and thus themselves an individual evolutionary advantage.

This suggests two hypotheses. First, that one of the traits that may have evolved in humans is conformity, an ability to fit in with a group and adopt its norms and customs. Second, that enforcement of those norms and customs could have been essential for group cohesion and harmony, especially as groups got bigger (bigness is important in battles against other groups).

Let's start with conformity. This hasn't been studied much in other animals, but male baboons do appear to conform to the social regimens of the groups they join. For example, in one baboon troop in Kenya in the 1980s, all the aggressive males died of tuberculosis. The aggressives were the ones to snuff it because they'd eaten meat infected with bovine TB that had been thrown into a garbage dump; only the more-aggressive males ate at the dump. After their deaths, the dynamics of the troop shifted to a more laid-back way of life. Ten years later—by which time all the original resident males had either died or moved on—the troop was still notable for its mellow attitude. The new males who'd arrived had adopted the local customs.

What about humans? According to Michael Tomasello—a psychologist at the Max Planck Institute, in Leipzig, Germany, who studies the behavior of human children and of chimpanzees—children as young as 3 will quickly deduce and conform to rules. If an adult demonstrates a game, and then a puppet comes in and plays it differently, the children will clamor to correct the puppet with shouts of “No, that's not the way you do it—you do it this way!” In other words, it's not just that they infer and obey rules; they try to enforce them, too.

Which brings me to the question of punishment.

## PUNISHMENT GAMES

I'll be dictator. Here's how we play: An economist puts some money on the table—let's say \$1,000. Since I'm dictator, I get to decide how you and I are going to split the cash; you have no say in the matter. How much do you think I'll give you?

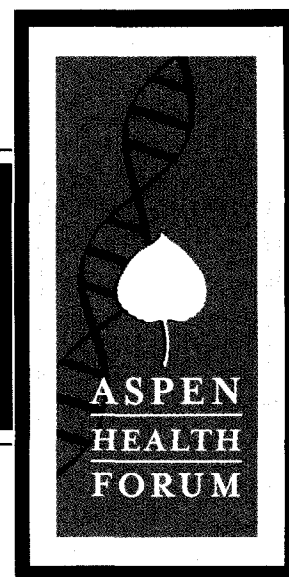
Now, let's play the ultimatum game. We've still got \$1,000 to play with, and I still get to make you an offer. But the game has a wrinkle: If you don't like the offer I make, you can refuse it. If you refuse it, we both get nothing. What do you think I'll do here?

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As you've probably guessed, people tend to play the two games differently. In the dictator game, the most common offer is nothing, and the average offer is around 20 percent. In the ultimatum game, the most common offer is half the cash, while the average is around 45 percent. Offers of less than 25 percent are routinely refused—so both players go home empty-handed.

Economists scratch their heads at this. In the first place, they are surprised that some people are nice enough to share with someone they don't know, even in the dictator game, where there's nothing to lose by not sharing. Second, economists predict that people will accept any offer in the ultimatum game, no matter how low, because getting something is better than getting nothing. But that's not what happens. Instead, some people forgo getting anything themselves in order to punish someone who made an ungenerous offer. Money, it seems, is not the only currency people are dealing in.

face. They are typically terrible with numbers but good with words. And they are weirdly, incautiously friendly and nice—and unafraid of strangers.

They are also missing a small segment of chromosome 7. Chromosomes are long strings of DNA. Most people have 46 chromosomes in 23 pairs; you get one set of 23 from your mother, and the other from your father. In Williams syndrome, one copy of chromosome 7 is normal; the other is missing a small piece. The missing piece contains about 20 genes, some of which make proteins that are important in the workings of the brain. Since one chromosome is intact, the problem isn't a complete absence of the proteins that the genes encode, but an insufficiency. Somehow, this insufficiency results in people who are too nice. What's more, they can't learn not to be nice. Which is to say, someone with Williams syndrome can learn the phrase "Don't talk to strangers" but can't translate it into action.

## Darwin wondered whether lethal warring between neighboring groups might have caused humans to evolve to be more helpful and kind to each other.

Bring in the neuroscientists, and the other currency gets clearer. If you measure brain activity while such games are being played (and there are many variants, for the fun doesn't stop with dictators and ultimatums), you find that the reward centers of the brain—the bits that give you warm, fuzzy feelings—light up when people are cooperating. But they also light up if you punish someone who wasn't generous, or watch the punishment of someone who wasn't.

Whether these responses are universal isn't clear: The genetic basis is obscure, and the number of people who've had their brain activity measured is tiny. Moreover, most economic-game playing has been done with college students; the extent to which the results hold among people from different cultures and backgrounds is relatively unknown. But the results suggest an intriguing possibility: that humans have evolved both to be good at conforming to the prevailing cultural norms and to enjoy making sure that those norms are enforced. (Perhaps this explains why schemes such as zero-tolerance policing work so well: They play into our desire to conform to the prevailing norms.)

### BRINGING OUT THE BEST

If the evolutionary scenario I've outlined is even half right, then we should expect to find that there are genes involved in mediating friendly behavior. And there are. Consider Williams syndrome.

People who have Williams syndrome tend to have poor cardiovascular function and a small, pointed, "elfin"

Much about Williams syndrome remains mysterious. How the missing genes normally influence behavior is unclear; moreover, the environment has a role to play, too. But despite these complexities, Williams syndrome shows that friendliness has a genetic underpinning—that it is indeed as primal as ferocity. Indirectly, it shows something else as well. Most of us are able to apply brakes to friendly behavior, picking and choosing the people we are friendly to; those with Williams syndrome aren't. They cannot modulate their behavior. This is even odder than being too friendly. And it throws into sharp relief one of the chief features of ordinary human nature: its flexibility.

One of the most important, and least remarked upon, consequences of social living is that individual behavior must be highly flexible and tailored to circumstance: An individual who does not know whom to be aggressive toward, or whom to help, is unlikely to survive for long within the group. This is true for baboons and chimpanzees. It is also true for us.

Indeed, the ability to adjust our behavior to fit a given social environment is one of our main characteristics, yet it's so instinctive we don't even notice it, let alone consider it worthy of remark. But its implications are profound—and hopeful. It suggests that we can, in principle, organize society so as to bring out the best facets of our complex, evolved natures. ■

Olivia Judson is an evolutionary biologist at Imperial College London.



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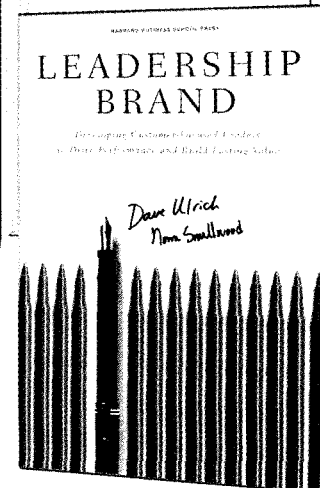
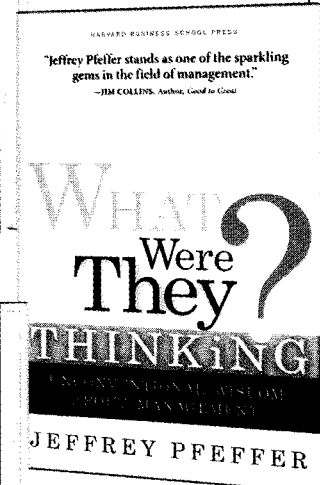
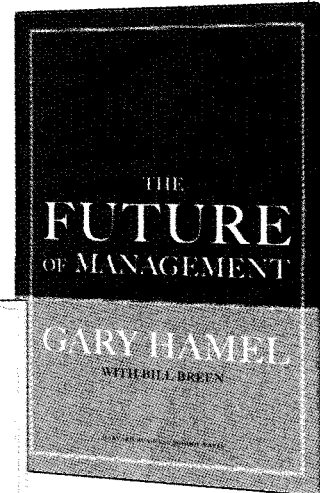
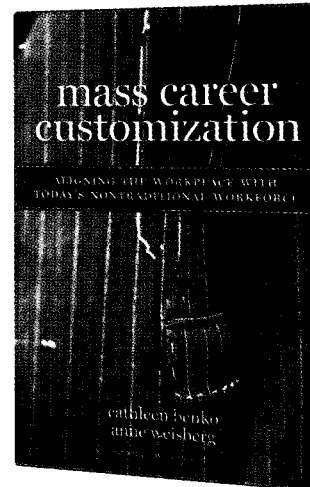
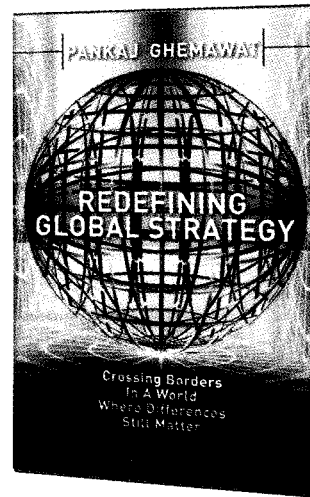
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What the future holds for Pakistan—  
and for America

BY JOSHUA HAMMER

# After Musha

Last November, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a bipartisan think tank in Washington, D.C., brought together more than two dozen former high-level United States government officials to take part in a half-day exercise on the future of Pakistan. In the room were former assistant secretaries of state and career ambassadors, as well as former senior officials from the Pentagon, the CIA, the Treasury, and USAID; it was a veritable who's who of Washington's Pakistan experts. The sponsors presented an escalating series of fictional crises—growing violence along the Pakistani-Afghan border, mass protests against the government by »

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radical Islamists, the arrest of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto shortly after her return from exile—and asked participants how they would respond to rising chaos in the nuclear-armed state.

The exercise culminated with this scenario: In the aftermath of Pakistan's national elections in late 2007, Taliban forces attempt to assassinate Afghan President Hamid Karzai, then retreat to a hideout in western Pakistan. U.S. forces pursue them, and an American soldier is taken captive in South Waziristan, a tribal region in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. As the kidnapers post video images of the hostage on the Internet, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf orders his army to attack the Taliban compound. The assault frees the American soldier, but leaves hundreds of militants, Pakistani troops, and civilians dead or wounded. Anti-government riots spread across the country, peaking in a confrontation between civilians and Pakistani forces in Lahore that leaves a dozen people dead. That evening, in what looks like a coup attempt, troops surround the houses of both Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz, the prime

# rraf

minister. Hours later, the U.S. ambassador receives a call from a previously unknown Pakistani two-star general, "raising serious concerns," according to the scenario playbook, "over whether the chain of command in Pakistan has remained intact."

At this point, the policy makers broke into groups and tried to come up with a strategy to deal with the apparent change of leadership. But this proved difficult: The groups were unable to resolve critical questions with confidence. Though most agreed that the military would continue running the show, as it has for 33 of the last 60 years, there was widespread concern over whether the new army brass would likely be pro-American, anti-American, or something in between. There was also no consensus on whether the military—with Musharraf out of the picture—could hold the country.

With Pakistan reeling from the army's bloody assault on radical Islamists inside Islamabad's Red Mosque, and from a series of retaliatory attacks on Pakistani security forces, this scenario, conceived 11 months ago, seems more







PAKISTANI RANGER RECRUITS on parade

realistic every day. The military is demoralized by the bloody guerrilla war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda along the border. Islamist political parties, who hold power in one of the country's four provinces and share control in another, have become a disruptive and sometimes violent force. And Musharraf's life remains under constant threat.

Even some members of Musharraf's inner circle have warned him that he risks losing power unless he radically changes course. (It is conceivable that by the time you read this, he will already have fallen.) The beginning of the end may have come this past March, when the president, in what has come to be seen as a major blunder, fired and placed under house arrest the supreme court's chief justice, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, an independent-minded jurist who had challenged the military regime on sensitive cases. Demonstrations in support of the judge swelled through the spring, soon morphing into a broad-based pro-democracy movement. Since then, Musharraf has seemed unsteady in public, alternating shrill accusations against his opponents with apologetic pleas for support and understanding.

The longest-serving military ruler in Pakistan's history, Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, lasted 11 years, before he was killed in a plane crash, in August 1988. Musharraf might last longer (he has so far served eight years), but the rising

unpredictability of when and how he might leave power has caused deep uncertainty—and anxiety—about what might follow him. One Western military liaison officer recounted a conversation he had with a general at staff headquarters in Rawalpindi the morning after last year's U.S. midterm elections. Coincidentally, the conversation took place just a day before the think-tank exercise on Pakistan's future, more than 7,000 miles away, and it puts the confusion of the exercise's participants in a better light. The general expressed his admiration for the constitutional process in the United States, and marveled at how, even after a sudden removal of a president—Kennedy's assassination, Nixon's resignation—the system continued to function. "If our president were to disappear tomorrow," the general admitted, "I have no idea in which direction our country would go."

**T**he nightmare scenario for U.S. policy makers—and one reason they remain heavily invested in Musharraf—is an Islamic revolution in Pakistan. A tide of anti-American sentiment, some analysts fear, could bring to power Islamists, who would give free rein to the Taliban, spread nuclear technology to rogue states and terrorist groups, and support the mujahideen in Kashmir.

There's no doubt that Islamists have grown in numbers and prominence in Pakistan since 9/11. In 2002,

AKHTAR SOOMRO/EPA/CORBIS

six fundamentalist parties formed an alliance called Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, or MMA, and rode a wave of anger at the American-led war in Afghanistan, taking 53 of the 342 seats in the National Assembly and forming the third-largest bloc in the parliament. The alliance won outright control of the provincial assembly in the North-West Frontier Province, and it now governs Balochistan in a coalition with Musharraf's ruling party. During the weeks that I spent in Islamabad earlier this year, the MMA repeatedly flexed its muscles in noisy protests—weekly demonstrations against legislation offering further legal protections to women, rallies against the government's razing of illegal makeshift mosques that have sprung up throughout the city. The demonstrations brought out hundreds of police officers and paralyzed traffic in the city for hours.

Moderate Muslims in Pakistan are worried about the Islamists' rising profile: Pervez Hoodbhoy, chairman of the Quaid-e-Azam University physics department, told me that the university has been "taken over" by Islamist fervor—more *hijabs* in the classrooms, more prayer, and "no bookstores, but three mosques with a fourth under construction" on campus. Hoodbhoy, a highly regarded nuclear physicist and a critic of military rule, told me that an Islamist takeover of the country, either by outright domination of the electoral process or in conjunction with a radical Islamist general, "is a real possibility."

10 Percent" for allegedly taking kickbacks from foreign corporations. Though she remains by far the best-known civilian politician in Pakistan, her popularity is questionable. Many members of her party say she has stifled the emergence of fresh faces by clinging to leadership in exile, and a gulf is widening between the landowning elite that sets her party's agenda and the working class that constitutes the bulk of its support.

Bhutto's main civilian challenger, Nawaz Sharif, the chairman of the Pakistan Muslim League and another former prime minister, was deposed by Musharraf in 1999 (he had tried to fire Musharraf after the general orchestrated an ill-fated foray into Indian-controlled Kashmir); he now lives in Saudi Arabia, and had, before Musharraf's crisis, reportedly promised to remain outside Pakistan for 10 years in return for the commutation of a lifetime prison sentence he had been given for attempting to stop Musharraf's plane from landing in Islamabad during the coup. (The plane was low on fuel, and Sharif was convicted of terrorism and hijacking.) Beyond Bhutto and Sharif, there are virtually no national politicians of substance. "The sad thing is that we can't create a new civilian leadership in the country," one parliamentarian told me. "With 342 seats in the National Assembly, and 100 in the Senate, and the same in the provincial parliaments, we can't find one person, besides Benazir and Sharif, who can be a prime minister or a president. It is a shame for this country."

## Many Pakistani military officers— and certainly the privileged upper echelons— have grown accustomed to the perks and privileges of political life.

Yet despite their clout in parliament and their seeming strength on the street, the Islamists are not widely popular: Their parties won only 11 percent of the vote in the 2002 elections (gerrymandering gave them a share of seats far greater than their numbers). Even in their stronghold, the North-West Frontier Province, they polled only 26 percent. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to the MMA's growth is its abysmal record of governance: In the North-West Frontier Province, which the alliance controls, social services are disintegrating. Unless anti-Western sentiment reaches sustained and unprecedented levels, the Islamists seem highly unlikely to muster enough votes to gain control of parliament in the next decade.

If this catastrophic scenario looks unlikely, so too does the potential for genuine democracy. Pakistan's largest opposition party, the Pakistan People's Party, or PPP, is run by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Bhutto fled to London in 1996 to escape corruption charges; her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, earned the nickname "Mr.

In late July, with his hold on power growing more tenuous, Musharraf met with Bhutto in Abu Dhabi to discuss her possible role in the next government (parliamentary elections are likely to be held this fall). A power-sharing arrangement, with Bhutto returning to become prime minister to offset Musharraf's presidency, might reduce political tensions, at least temporarily, and give civilians more say in governance. As this magazine went to press, no such deal had been struck. Even if one were achieved, it would be unlikely to greatly affect the underlying balance of power. As of this writing, Musharraf appeared likely to retain the presidency in the short run—either by reelection or by declaration of emergency rule. And although the presidency is nominally Pakistan's highest post, Musharraf derives greater power still from another position: chief of the army. His refusal to relinquish this second role has been a significant source of popular discontent. It is widely believed that he won't give it up because he realizes that without it, he could quickly be

reduced to a figurehead by a rival general. And indeed, if he did give up his title, the real center of power would shift not to any civilian politician or political party, but to the new army chief.

Whatever happens to Musharraf, the presidency, and the parliament, there is little doubt that the military will remain the dominant player in Pakistan for as long as it chooses. During the 11 years of democracy that followed Zia ul-Haq's death, the civilian prime ministers, Bhutto and Sharif, had diminishing influence over Pakistan's foreign policy and its nuclear program; Bhutto famously called the military-run Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI, a "state within a state" and accused military intelligence of listening in on her phone calls. In 1990, the army, after charging her with corruption, engineered her removal by presidential decree. Sharif was tossed out nine years later, effectively at gunpoint. According to one senior Western diplomat in Islamabad, "If Musharraf should disappear from the scene tomorrow, you would have a meeting of senior military men, and a new chief of army staff, and that would be, either overtly or behind the scenes, your new government."

Throughout the ongoing crisis, the generals have played their cards close to the vest. Retired Lieutenant General Hamid Gul, the former head of the ISI, witnessed the transition from military to civilian rule after the death of Zia ul-Haq, in 1988, and he believes that

after nearly eight years in power, the military is once again ready to recede into the background. "They will go back into the barracks, and they will be happy, because they would still be influencing the government," he told me. "The military casts a long shadow, and they would be protected."

Most American Pakistan-watchers, however, believe that many military officers—and certainly the privileged upper echelons—want just the opposite, and are less likely than ever to surrender power: They have grown accustomed to the perks and privileges of political life. "They don't have a game plan for a withdrawal from politics," says Stephen Philip Cohen, a fellow at the Brookings Institution, who has written frequently about the Pakistani military.

In the Western diplomat's view, the military's continued dominance would present no immediate danger to the United States or the region, because Musharraf's inner circle is secular, U.S.-trained, and at least nominally committed to the Bush administration's "war on terror." But these men are in their mid- and late 50s and moving toward the mandatory-retirement age of 60. (Musharraf himself turned 64 in August; he has ignored the mandatory-retirement rule.) The next tier of the military command is not nearly as well known. "We hope that this group would be Western-oriented, but there's no guarantee," says Derek Chollet, a participant in the Washington think tank exercise on Pakistan in November. "We simply don't know who they are."

## LISE

Seeing the MGM lion roar,  
Lise complains she's seen this show before.

My father-in-law's live-in caretaker,  
Haitian, *tout douleur*,

She knows Seventh-Day Adventist lore,  
The perfidy of men, how to cure

Oppressive itching. Her  
Cooking doesn't please him anymore,

But he likes her lilting French, her hair  
And gentle hands, her living soapy spoor.

—DAVID THORBURN

David Thorburn is a professor of literature at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and directs the MIT Communications Forum.

Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, is a clean, even sterile, city of wide boulevards, faux-Moghul architecture, and wooded parks. The army's presence is hardly overbearing; you rarely see uniformed officers or gun-toting soldiers on the streets. But as you become more attuned to the city's culture and commerce, you begin to realize that in fact the military is everywhere.

On my first evening in the capital, I got a taste of how the officer corps has insinuated itself into political life: A well-connected colleague brought me to a lavish wedding reception in the Hotel Serena for the daughter of the minister of the interior, Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao.

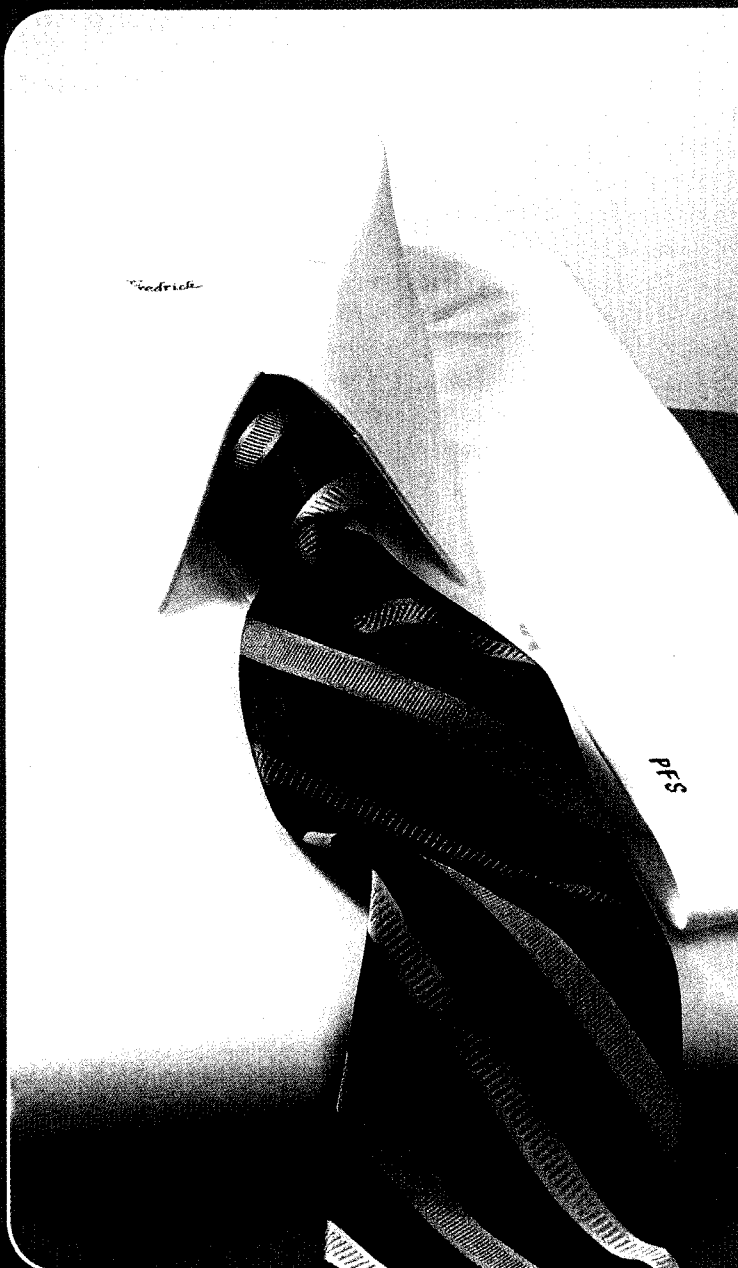
I expected to see bigwigs at the reception, and I did. The surprise—at a wedding for a civilian government official—was how many had military pedigrees. The reception was chock-full of generals and retired generals, including several corps commanders, the vice chief of army staff, Musharraf's press secretary, and—briefly—Musharraf himself. Almost all of them were, like Musharraf, wearing suits, not uniforms, but everyone knew who they were. My colleague, a newspaper editor based in Islamabad, pointed them out as they strutted about, nodding like dons to the other guests, the higher-ups accompanied by military secretaries and junior



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officers, also in civilian clothes. Musharraf himself moved serenely through the crowd, shaking hands and smiling beneficently. As we watched from a corner, my colleague observed wearily, "The line between military men and politicians has totally blurred in this country."

The army has dramatically increased its role in the public sector since Musharraf took over. "Thousands of officers are now employed in civil jobs; they have the best of everything," says retired General Aslam Beg, who served as chief of army staff under Benazir Bhutto from 1988 to 1991. One parliamentary opposition leader recently charged that 56,000 civil-service jobs had come into the hands of army personnel (other sources put this figure lower). Retired generals and brigadiers have taken over as chancellors and vice chancellors at Pakistani universities; they also run the post office, the tax authority, the housing authority, and the education department. Retired generals serve as the governors of two of Pakistan's four provinces.

of the Fauji Foundation and other military-run conglomerates appear on trucks, boxes, and buildings throughout the city. As Hoodbhoy told me, "They own gas companies. They make fertilizer, cement, soap, bottled water. They even make cereals, so when I have breakfast, I can't get away from them."

Midway through my stay in Pakistan, I attended a small dinner party in Islamabad. The guests included a handful of daily-newspaper reporters, a management consultant, and a young female member of parliament from Musharraf's party. All of them—even the president's own party loyalist—were openly resentful of the military and its stranglehold on political and economic life. As we sat in a cramped dining room, eating *biryani*s and drinking tea, the group exchanged stories about military privilege. The consultant had recently returned after five years in the U.S., and he had landed a project at an army-run conglomerate that operates 41 companies and employs 15,000 people. He described his discovery that

## Military rule may have been helpful to U.S. interests for a time, but it isn't any longer.

The armed forces also control more than a hundred private-sector companies and have placed retired officers in the upper reaches of Pakistan's major businesses and industries. Rao Khalid Mehmood, former defense correspondent for the *Nation* newspaper in Islamabad and now the Islamabad bureau chief at a startup Pakistani television news channel, told me that at present, the military is the gateway to private-sector employment. Many people believe that "the only way to get a job is to know someone in the army," he says.

Ayesha Siddiqi, a well-known analyst in Islamabad and the author of *Military Inc.: Inside the Pakistani Military Economy*, says that the armed forces are major players in real estate, agribusiness, and several other industries. The empire includes banks, cable-TV companies, insurance agencies, sugar refineries, private security firms, schools, airlines, cargo services, and textile factories. The Fauji Foundation, for instance, is a "welfare trust" that is run by the defense ministry and spans 15 business enterprises. It provides cushy jobs for hundreds of retired officers (many retire in their late 40s), pays few taxes, and channels profits into a fund that is intended to benefit retired military personnel. And it is just one of several giant military-run foundations and companies that were set up decades ago and have grown steadily ever since.

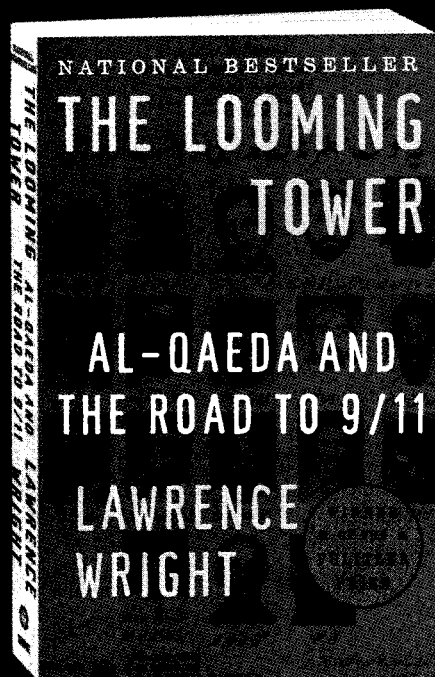
The military's intrusion into commerce is quite visible in Islamabad, if you know what to look for. The logos

of the corporation's top jobs, as well as those across many of the 41 companies, all were taken by retired officers with no formal business training and little understanding of basic economics. "Finance was managed by a colonel," he said. "Administration, risk management, human resources—these were jobs given as perks to retired officers." After several years of underperformance, the conglomerate had requested a bailout of nearly \$100 million from the government. His firm had been hired to turn the business around. Speaking of the armed forces' role in Pakistan's economy, he said, "They have the power, and they can do whatever they want."

The parliamentarian added that the army was steadily helping itself to Islamabad's best land, often reselling it at a significant profit. The main vehicle for the landgrab, she told me, was the Defense Housing Authority, which purchases properties from private parties, for development and distribution to the officer corps. As a rule, she explained, the market value of the development escalates sharply once the military buys the property, because it is immediately regarded as prestigious and highly secure. "The corps commander gets a kickback from the real-estate developer," she said, and then "distributes the plots to lower-ranking officers [at government-subsidized prices], and sells what's left to civilians at a huge profit."

One afternoon, my driver, a 40-year-old Pashtun who had spent 20 years in the army as a chauffeur for the top

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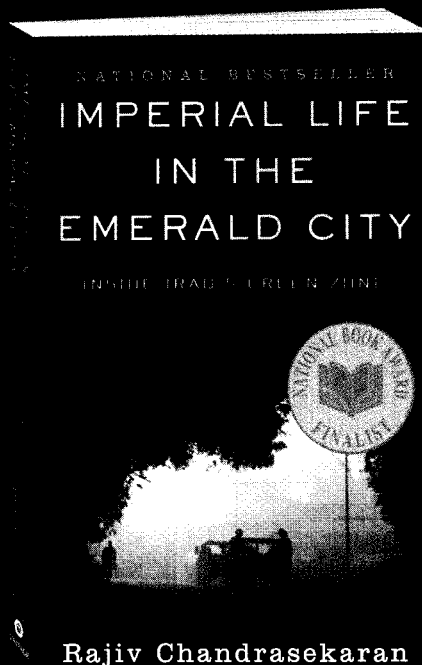


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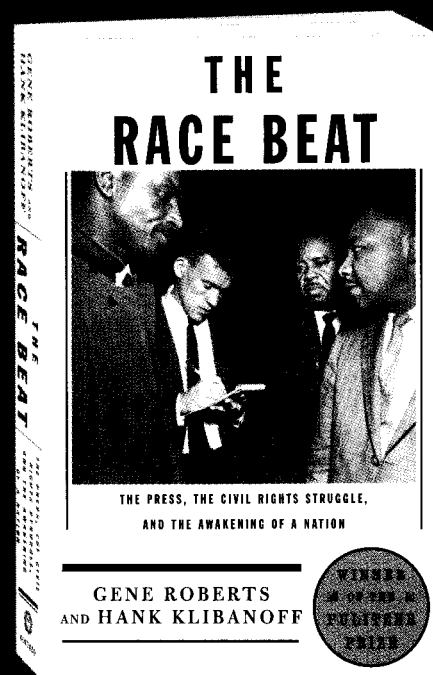
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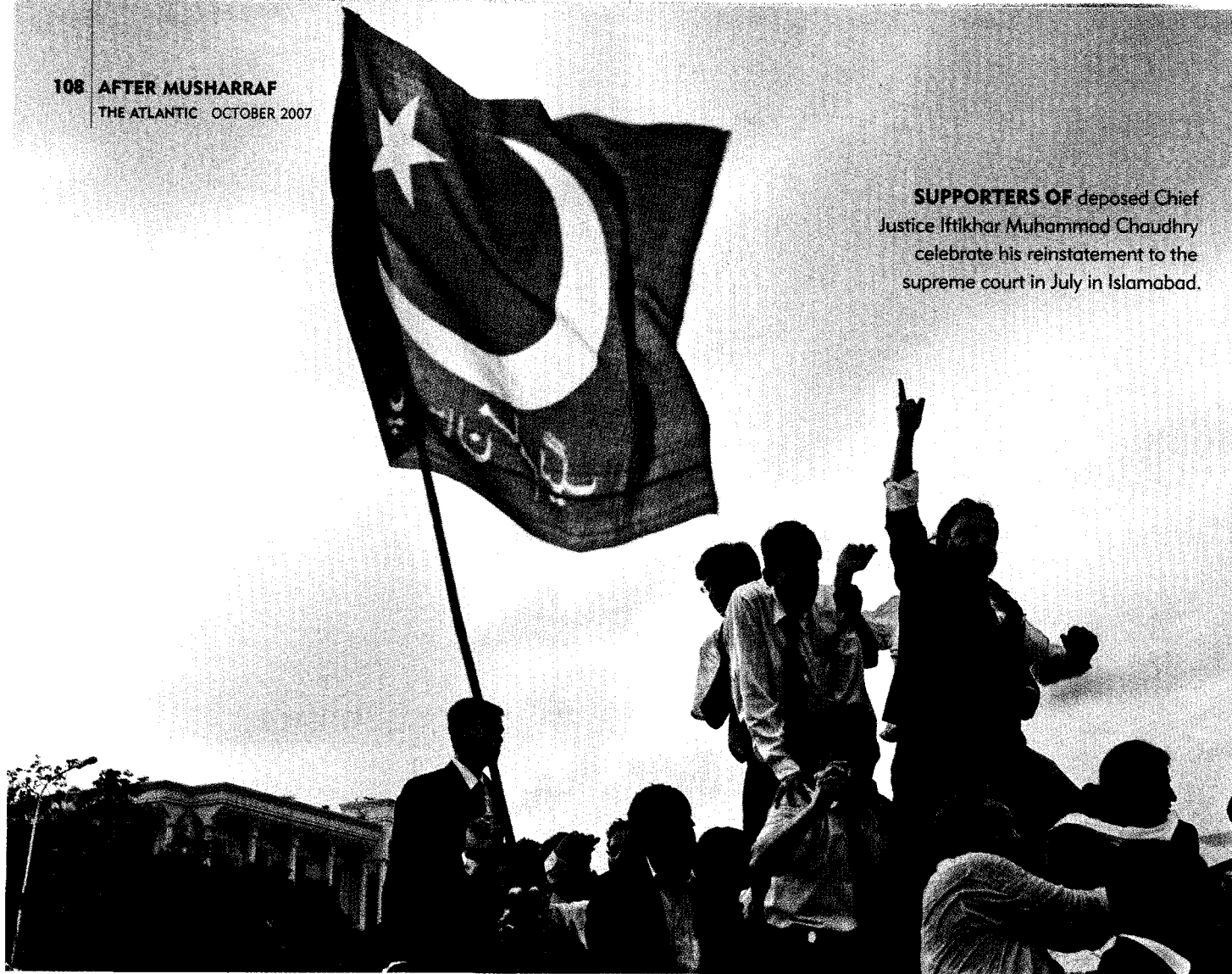
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**SUPPORTERS OF** deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry celebrate his reinstatement to the supreme court in July in Islamabad.



brass, took me on a tour of his former employers' neighborhood. We drove 12 miles from Islamabad to Rawalpindi, an old city of mosques and bazaars that during colonial times was the site of a British cantonment. Today it is the location of Pakistan's general military headquarters, and large portions of the city have been taken over by housing developments for the retired military elite. Entering the city on the main Islamabad-Rawalpindi highway, we passed a large air-force base; the bridge where al-Qaeda operatives tried to blow up Musharraf's convoy in 2003; and a new McDonald's built on the site of the razed prison where former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Benazir's father, was hanged in 1979 on the order of Zia ul-Haq, the general who deposed him.

We turned into a gated community called "Askari 8," otherwise known as "Military Row." Our car crept along quiet residential lanes, planted with palm trees and lined with palatial villas of brick and marble. I might have thought we were in an exclusive Southern California suburb, except for the bronze plaques on the front gates identifying the owners: a former corps commander of Rawalpindi, a former vice chief of staff, a retired head of the ISI. Around the corner lay rows of smaller mansions. These belonged to brigadiers, my driver told me, officers one rank down from general.

The army's encroachment on civilian affairs has not inspired any kinship between the military and civilians, whom many officers view as inferior. A sense of entitlement is inculcated in the officer corps at the Pakistan Military Academy, in Kakul, a former base of the Indian army set among the pine-forested Himalayan foothills of the North-West Frontier Province. It was established shortly after partition in 1947, as a sort of home-grown version of Sandhurst, the British school where many Indian officers received their military education. In a tranquil setting dominated by snowy peaks, cadets culled from a huge pool of applicants spend two and a half years studying governance and political theory; the syllabus spans the canon of Western and Islamic literature and includes ancient Greek philosophers, Middle Eastern poets and historians, even the Indian military strategist Chanakya. Musharraf graduated from the academy in 1964; it is perhaps telling that since he came to power, the academy has begun offering courses in economics and business management.

The cadets spend as much time training their bodies as their minds. The climax of their athletic training is the "Acid Test," a multi-hour ordeal of running, climbing, and trudging over difficult terrain, while laden with heavy gear. At the finish, those who complete the test fire celebratory

TOMAS MUNTA/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX STOCK

rounds at a target, and look up at an inscription that reads “VERILY THE POWER LIES IN FIREPOWER.”

“Once you are through Kakul, you are the elect—you are a breed apart,” says Tanvir Ahmed Khan, a former Pakistani foreign secretary. The military academy, he says, instills in cadets “a sense of pride and a genuine, deep-seated contempt for everyone outside the military.” That contempt, says Khan, is rooted in a belief that civilian governments have proved uniformly inept and corrupt, repeatedly forcing the military to “rescue” the country from the clutches of incompetent civil servants and thieving politicians—a position that is increasingly ironic as the military dips ever deeper into the public trough.

The Pakistani military’s relationship with the United States has been tempestuous. American and Pakistani soldiers began working together in the field in the 1950s, bound by mutual concerns about Soviet expansionism in the region. The relationship cooled after the United States imposed sanctions following Pakistan’s 1965 war with India, but it warmed up again under the military dictatorship of Zia ul-Haq: The U.S. Department of Defense moved more than a thousand Pakistani officers through its International Military Education and Training program, or IMET, giving them months of training alongside American officers at elite American military institutions.

2001). “We lost a generation,” the Western military liaison officer told me. That generation now overwhelmingly makes up the ranks of brigadier, colonel, and major—and includes some generals—in Pakistan’s military.

By the early 1990s, as the Cold War was ending and the United States was disengaging from Central and South Asia, Pakistan’s army had taken on a more Islamist character. Back in 1979, Zia ul-Haq—in an attempt to stir up zeal for the campaign in support of Afghanistan’s mujahideen—had enacted a raft of Islamist ordinances, or *hudood*, posting an imam to every unit, encouraging prayer in the barracks, and installing a religious-affairs directorate at general headquarters. Banners outside army recruiting centers reportedly urged Pakistanis to enlist for the sake of Allah and jihad.

During this period the army and the ISI stepped up covert training of Islamist mujahideen to wage a guerrilla war against India in Kashmir, transforming what had been a largely secular struggle into a jihad—a war to liberate Islamic brethren from the yoke of the “Hindu occupiers.” The Taliban’s seizure of power in Afghanistan in 1996—also backed by Pakistan—furthered the military’s goal of bleeding the Indian army in Kashmir; the Taliban allowed the Pakistani army to operate dozens of training camps in Afghanistan for the Kashmir struggle. The Taliban, who are ethnic Pashtuns with direct tribal links to Pakistan’s own Pashtun population in the North-

## ‘This is not our battle,’ a Pakistani major told me. ‘This is your battle, and we’re paying the price.’

Major General Shaukat Sultan Khan, Musharraf’s press secretary until March 2007, spent six months in infantry school at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1983. He explained to me how the American training shaped the mentality of thousands of young officers of his generation. “It helps you to establish a better relationship and more understanding [of the U.S. perspective],” he said. “It broadens your outlook.” At a recent gathering of regional commanders in Kabul, Shaukat Sultan formed an immediate bond with an American brigadier he had last seen during his Fort Benning days. “It gave us a connection,” said Shaukat Sultan. “[Now] I can pick up the phone and call him directly.”

Shaukat Sultan was among the last of a breed, however. In 1987, toward the end of the mujahideen campaign against the Soviets in Afghanistan, Congress threatened to impose sanctions if Pakistan continued to develop nuclear weapons. Three years later, the sanctions went into effect, and the United States suspended the IMET program. For the next 11 years, until 9/11, Pakistani officers had little or no contact with the U.S. military (IMET resumed in late

West Frontier Province and Balochistan, also provided a bulwark against Afghanistan’s Tajik-dominated Northern Alliance and its key ally, India.

The military’s support for Islamist causes was primarily tactical, and its inculcation of Islamist values in its troops appears to have been halfhearted. Shaukat Sultan told me, “There neither used to be orders during the Zia days that everyone come down for prayers, nor are there orders now. It all depends on the individual commanding officers.” Nonetheless, in February 2000, Lieutenant General Mahmoud Ahmad, then the head of the ISI, claimed to an analyst at the Rand Corporation that “between 15 and 16 percent” of the Pakistani officer corps were Islamic extremists.

The United States, of course, took a renewed interest in Pakistan after 9/11. Faced with the now-infamous threat, supposedly delivered by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage, that the country would be bombed “back to the Stone Age” if it failed to support the

war on terrorism, Musharraf reversed course, dragging a sometimes-reluctant army along with him. In perhaps the most striking example of the country's about-face, Musharraf in December 2001 ordered a full army corps into the tribal areas to intercept al-Qaeda and sometimes Taliban militants fleeing across the Afghan border after the U.S.-led invasion; by the end of 2004, several hundred foreign militants had been captured.

Musharraf also cleaned house within the generals' rank. General Mahmoud, the ISI chief and a Taliban ally who had opposed the American invasion of Afghanistan, was sacked just weeks after 9/11. Musharraf downgraded the Islamic-affairs office from a directorate to a "section" run by a junior officer, and sought to dilute Islamist influence in the ranks. He began vetoing promotions of brigadiers and generals, and has put his own people in charge of the selection process at Pakistan Military Academy.

## ALBUM

Why on earth does a postage stamp come to mind  
When I see those floating bodies,  
Immaculate faces of infants sleeping too deeply  
In the wake of the tsunami?

Long ago, a flood overtook the basement,  
Almost all the old books in ruins,  
Leather bindings buckling, gilded edges fading,  
The marbling drifting away.

From the wreckage we pulled the stamp albums  
My father kept, and another that was mine,  
Holding the countries I longed to visit, lozenges  
Of color, names too fragrant to pronounce.

Nations that are no more could slumber there,  
Though swallowed or torn;  
Mountains, bridges, and flowers survived.  
The cover was stained, the pages dried,

But one of the stamps had come undone,  
Sliding from corners lovingly fastened—  
And now whole shorelines are sliding away.  
The book of the world so swollen it cannot close.

—PHILLIS LEVIN

Phillis Levin is the editor of *The Penguin Book of the Sonnet* (2001).  
Her forthcoming collection, *May Day*, will be published next spring.

He surrounded himself with a cadre of politically moderate generals, almost all of whom had been trained in the United States, including the army's vice chief, Lieutenant General Ahsan Saleem Hayat, the next in line for the army's top spot.

Nonetheless, the war along the border has opened a divide between the top military brass and junior officers. In 2006 alone, at least 300 Pakistani soldiers died in this campaign, most in roadside-bomb attacks or ambushes in the mountainous terrain; thousands of militants and civilians were also killed and injured. Tanvir Ahmed Khan, the former foreign secretary, recently addressed a gathering of mid-level officers at one of the army's premier training establishments about the war in Afghanistan, and found some uncertainty about Pakistani policy. I spoke with Khan for several hours at his comfortable house in Islamabad. An erudite figure in his early 70s who held senior positions during the Zia ul-Haq and Benazir Bhutto years, Khan has lectured and written widely on Pakistan's relations with its neighbors. He maintains ties with many of the country's most powerful military figures of the past three decades.

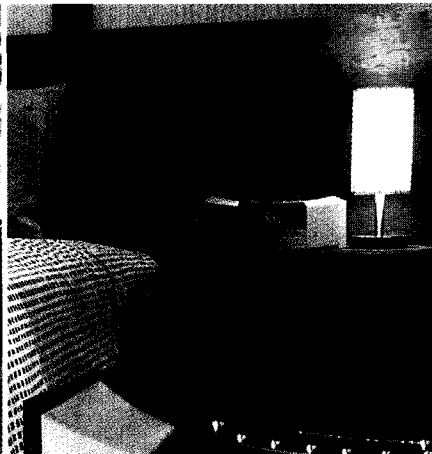
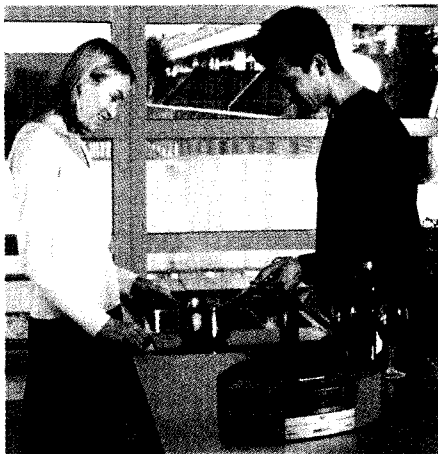
Khan recounted for me a telling conversation he'd had after his lecture at the training center. He was approached by an army major in his 30s who was confused about a Pakistani bombing raid in South Waziristan that had killed dozens of local Pashtun tribesmen who were fighting for the Taliban. The officer perceived the tribesmen not as terrorists but as Pashtun nationalists, whose targets were the Western occupiers and who had no quarrel with the Pakistani government. "He said, 'I am ashamed of what has been done there,'" Khan told me. The military has no love for al-Qaeda, Khan continued, at least as long as al-Qaeda can be defined as "the Arabs," as "the other." But "when Musharraf claims that he has attacked these insurgents, and the media insist that dead bodies are those of tribesmen," Khan said, "it becomes a different story."

Near the end of my stay in Pakistan, a journalist friend in Islamabad introduced me to an old friend of his: a 35-year-old major in the Pakistani army, who had agreed to talk to me as long as I didn't use his name or identify his unit. We met in a small, smoky lounge at my friend's newspaper office. The major, who was wearing civilian clothes—jeans and a wool sweater thrown over a polo shirt—was a stocky, affable man who spoke colloquial English; he seemed relaxed and uninhibited, once I assured him that I'd protect his identity. "Major Khaled," as I'll call him, grew up in northern Punjab—the "martial belt" that has traditionally provided the vast majority of soldiers and officers in the army—and he received his training at the Pakistan Military Academy. His career mirrored that of many other ambitious young Pakistani officers, and until recently, he had followed his orders



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without questioning them: He had participated enthusiastically, for instance, in the 1999 invasion of Kargil. All of that changed after Pakistani troops were deployed in the tribal agencies along the border to put down local insurgents and foreign fighters.

"I've met people of all ranks, in the line of fire, and nobody is happy with this way of solving the problem in Waziristan," he told me. "The terrain is hard. It's difficult to hold the ground. The insurgents know every inch of the area." Major Khaled told me he resented the implication, which he felt the U.S. government had fostered, that Pakistan was serving as the main refuge for Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters. "The terrain around Kabul is similar, so why do they say that the only hideouts are in Waziristan?" he said. "Why is Pakistan singled out? Pakistan has suffered a lot. I've lost colleagues in ambushes, to time bombs, to improvised explosive devices. The Pakistan army is bleeding for you people." I asked Khaled if his doubts about the mission had ever caused him to disobey the commands of higher-ups. He shook his head. "I'm not a policy maker. We just have to follow the orders, but people down below don't go into battle from their hearts. There could have been other options. This is not our battle. This is your battle, and we're paying the price."

Though Major Khaled told me that he admired American democracy and liked the American soldiers he had met, he had little confidence in the United States as an ally or benefactor. "We know that the United States tomorrow won't hesitate to forget us. They've done it before," he said. The only reason that Musharraf had signed on to the war on terrorism, he said, was that his government "has a gun to its head, and it has no other options." He returned to the theme that Pakistan was fighting a proxy war for an untrustworthy ally. "If we had to face bullets [to save Pakistan], we'd go, but why do that for someone who's not loyal to you [when Pakistan is not threatened]? This is not our war; Taliban, al-Qaeda are not criminals in our country."

The Western military liaison officer, who works closely with his Pakistani counterparts, says that the entire Pakistani military, from Musharraf on down, has been deeply ambivalent about the border campaign. He told me he thinks that Musharraf himself is beginning to realize that the Taliban and al-Qaeda could pose a threat to Pakistan's security if left untended, but that this view has not yet permeated the military leadership. In addition, he said, "They know that their initial army forays were largely unsuccessful, and that their army had never been in the [tribal areas] and was viewed as foreign—almost as much as our army would be. So they've backed away."

The Pakistanis, he says, often appear to turn a blind eye to insurgent infiltrations, fail to man border posts, and ignore American requests for cooperation. For months they have refused to establish a joint operations center in

the border zone. "They say, 'We're thinking about it,' but it never happens," he says. He gave me an example of how Pakistani officers can sometimes work directly against U.S. interests on the border: On the afternoon of January 10, U.S. intelligence detected four "jingle trucks"—brightly painted vehicles adorned with jingling bits of metal, which typically serve as buses in both Pakistan and Afghanistan—transporting about 200 heavily armed insurgents to the border of the Kurram tribal agency, west of Peshawar.

Three Pakistani border posts were within a kilometer of where the trucks were off-loading fighters, but the fighters crossed into Afghanistan in broad daylight, unmolested. The Pakistanis ignored American requests to detain and interrogate the truck drivers. After the trucks had driven away, the Pakistani soldiers told the Americans that the drivers said they were innocent contractors. "We asked, 'Why didn't you arrest them? You could have interrogated them and asked them where they picked up the fighters, how much money they were paid, if they recognized foreign fighters.' But they didn't. They let them go."

The Americans' perceptions of the Pakistanis are shared by security officers in Kashmir. S. M. Sahai, the inspector general of the Jammu & Kashmir Police, the institution responsible for interdicting insurgents who cross the border from Pakistan, told me that Pakistani soldiers, especially enlisted men and "younger officers," are generally sympathetic to the Islamist insurgency. "If they have a face-to-face encounter with them along the border, they will arrest them," Sahai told me in Srinagar. "But the general attitude is to look the other way."

What might the United States lose if Musharraf were to fall from power, and what would it stand to gain? Curiously, on the issue that U.S. policy makers seem to care most about today—military action against Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives in the North-West Frontier Province and Balochistan—Musharraf's presence or absence might make little difference. As the United States has recently found, Pakistan's military is willing to push only so hard on this front; institutional resistance, popular opposition, and Pakistan's own strategic calculus are likely to limit action, no matter who is in charge. At the same time, some action and cooperation—intelligence sharing, covert assistance, low-grade military operations, and the rare high-profile strike—can probably be coaxed out of any regime that is likely to follow Musharraf's. The Pakistani army deeply values the American high-tech weaponry it receives; the equipment helps it keep pace with India's army. Benazir Bhutto, for her part, recently stated publicly that she wholeheartedly supported the war on terrorism. And the appetite of moderate Pakistanis for incursions against the militants has increased in the wake of the Red Mosque confrontation and the series of suicide attacks that followed.

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The threat of an outright Islamist revolution—by gun or ballot—is low today, and so too is the threat that nuclear weapons could fall into the wrong hands. The army is not dominated by jihadists, and its controls on its missiles are strong. Yet the course of Pakistani politics remains vital to the United States. Military rule in Pakistan may have been helpful to U.S. interests for a time, but it isn't any longer. The benefits have diminished, while the corrosive effects on society have grown—and continue to grow.

The military's younger generation has exhibited some of the same unsavory tendencies as Musharraf: an inclination toward authoritarianism, contempt for civilians, indulgence of military corruption, and an unequivocal belief in the military as the country's savior. It also appears more sympathetic to Islamist causes and more hostile to India than is Musharraf. Pakistani officers in their 30s do not believe that the U.S. wants a long-lasting relationship with Pakistan; they have little camaraderie with U.S. soldiers, and they feel little empathy for U.S. political or diplomatic positions.

And while the military aims to do the opposite, it is slowly destabilizing Pakistan. Eight years of usurpation of power by Musharraf have weakened secular parties, corrupted the judiciary, and implanted army men in every facet of civilian life. Pakistan's population is now doubling every 38 years, creating severe social pressures. If the political process remains stunted, the Islamists may continue to gather strength until the country reaches a tipping point. "We are not going to collapse if Musharraf goes tomorrow; Pakistan will go on, *insha'allah*," I was told by Mohammed Enver Baig, a senator with the Pakistan People's Party. "But the 2007 elections could be a turning point for all of us. If the elections are not fair, don't be surprised if next time—after five years—you come and see me, I might have a long beard myself."

America may best serve its interests, then, by pulling off a balancing act: reinforcing ties to the existing power structure in Pakistan (the armed forces) while at the same time pushing hard for democracy. These two ends are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In August 1988, immediately after the death of the military dictator Zia ul-Haq, the vice chief of army staff, General Aslam Beg, summoned his naval and air chiefs, the head of the ISI, and the army judge advocate general to headquarters in Rawalpindi and informed them that he was turning over power to the chairman of the senate, a civilian, as Pakistan's constitution requires. There was no resistance, Beg recalls, and the new civilian president immediately called for multiparty elections. Those elections were among the freest and fairest in Pakistani history, and they ushered in 11 years of vibrant—if corrupt—civilian rule, ending only with Musharraf's coup. Given the prizes the army has since won under Musharraf, a quick and complete withdrawal from politics appears unlikely this time around—and therefore even a civilian

democracy would find itself greatly constrained by military interests. But with careful management by Pakistan's politicians, and strong encouragement by the international community, the army might slowly disengage.

One important change in U.S. strategy that may already be having an effect is the reinstatement of the officer training program. Last year, the United States trained 112 Pakistani officers. Stepped-up military training could go a long way toward building trust, tamping down anti-American sentiment, and encouraging professionalism, respect for human rights, and a withdrawal to the barracks. "We lost 10 years," I was told by the Western military liaison official. "We need to make up for lost time."

Among junior officers, there is some support for relinquishing power. Major Khaled, the young officer I met in Islamabad, told me that back when he joined the army, "we went through villages during military exercises, and people welcomed us and gave us water, assistance. It's the opposite now. They think I'm a rich guy just because I'm a soldier. I feel the resentment; I see the bad looks. People say we've hung around too long." This widening gap between civilians and military has led to intense questioning among the junior officers, he told me. "A few days back, six of us were discussing the options, and we said, 'The army can exit and call for a fair and impartial election. Let the exiled leaders come back to Pakistan and install a civilian government. Democracy is the right way.'"

I wasn't sure whether Khaled was just spouting a line that he wanted me to hear, but the more he spoke, the more emphatic he became: "Our neighbor India has had democracy for 60 years. But the problem here persists. The courts are pathetic; judges are not independent; the police are illiterate, low-paid, and not fair; and corruption is rampant. A 50-year-old cop with five kids is getting \$100 a month. What is he supposed to do?" The military, Major Khaled said, "should have strengthened the institutions instead of weakening them."

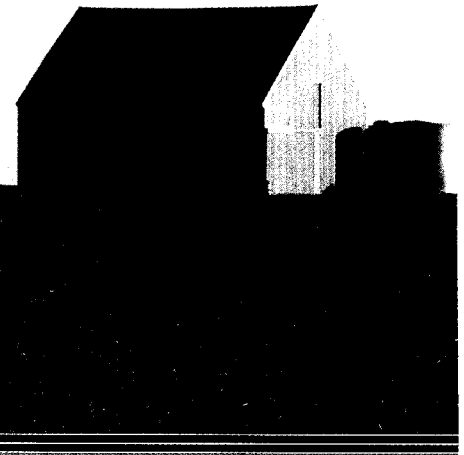
Restoring democracy in Pakistan is no guarantee of stability, or of a friendly attitude toward the United States. But a viable multiparty system could defuse the power of the Islamists and impose some checks on a military that controls every aspect of policy. And it would leave the United States less dependent upon the whims of a post-Musharraf general answerable only to the clique at headquarters. "I want restoration of political freedoms," Hoodbhoy told me. "Let people organize, hold political rallies; let there be trade unions, student unions, even if these unions would be ones you and I wouldn't like. Because when we have mobilization of society, we can have a Pakistan, down the line, where people matter. If I were an American president, I would make my support for Musharraf conditional on that." ■

Joshua Hammer is a writer based in Berlin. He is currently working on a book about Germany's colonial ambitions in Africa and the 20th century's first genocide.

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## INDIANA'S 8TH DISTRICT

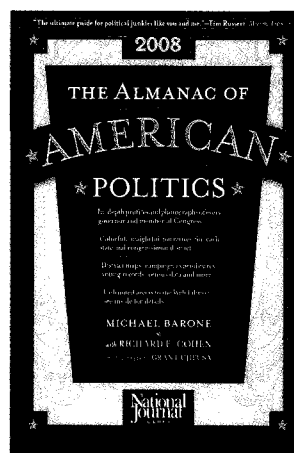
*Southern Indiana is ancestrally Democratic, just as northern Indiana is ancestrally Republican. The result has been a very close political balance and this district becoming known as the "Bloody Eighth" for its tight congressional races.*

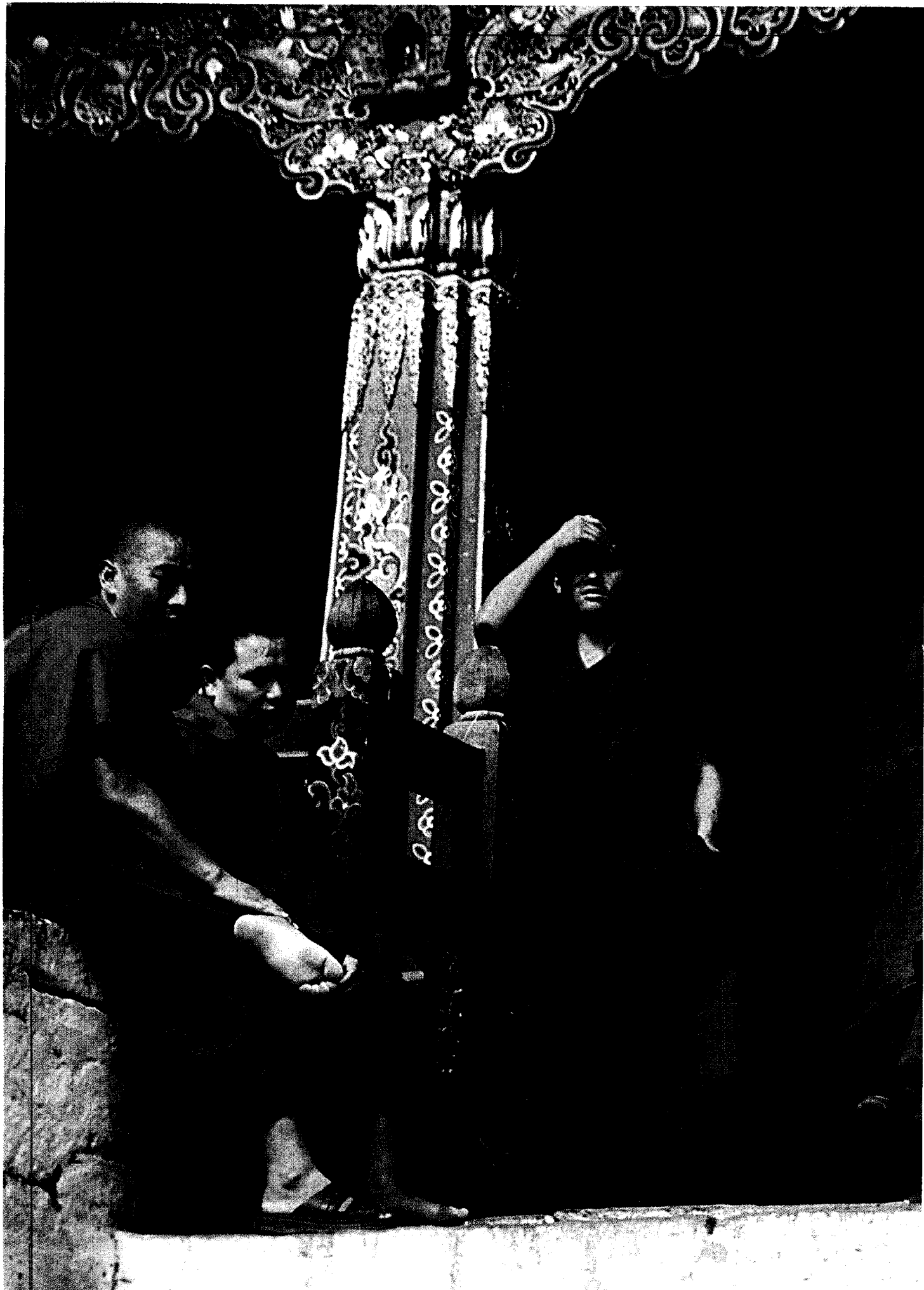


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## BOOKS

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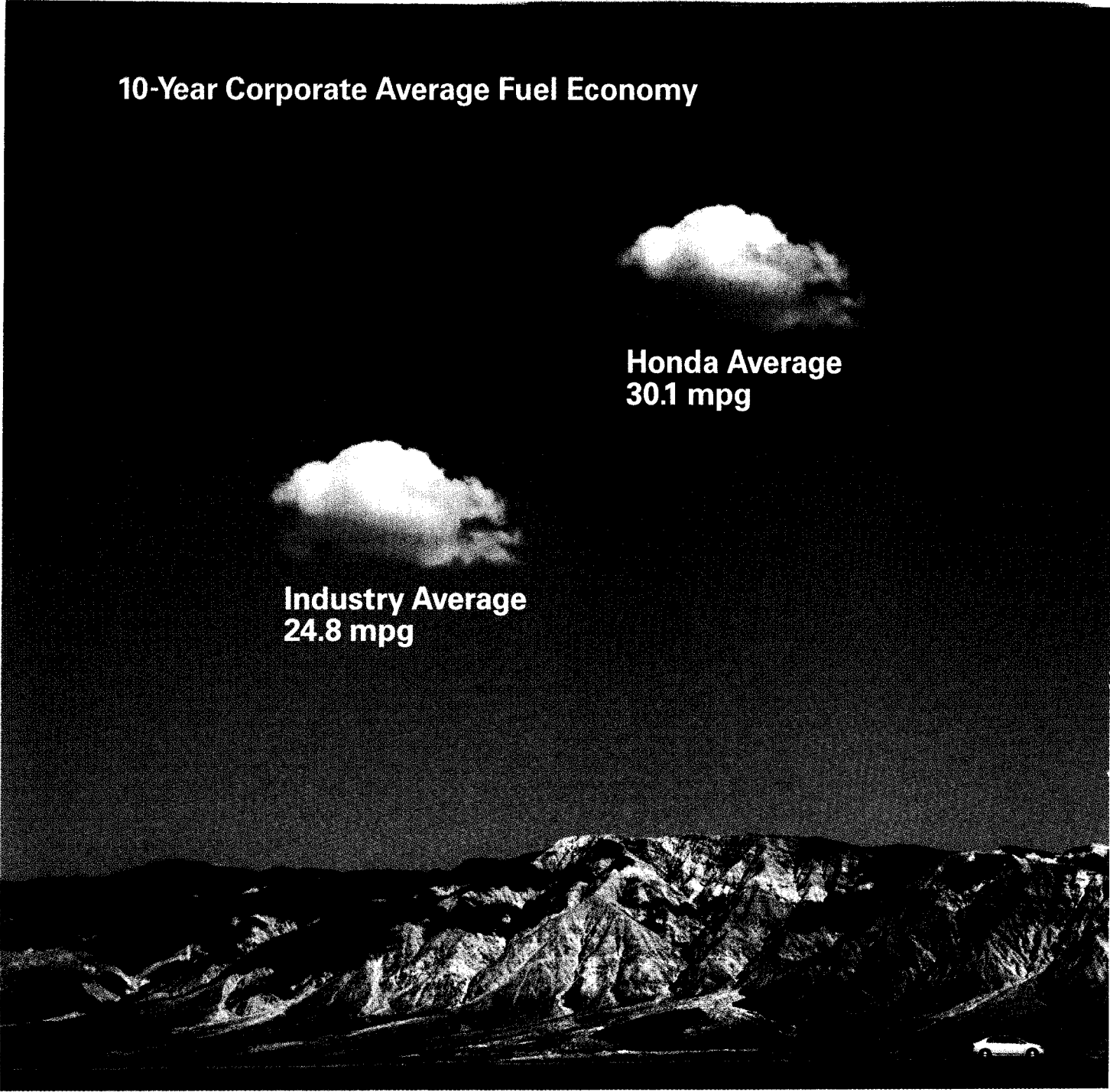
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### A WORLD APART

Buddhist monks gather near the entrance of a temple in Bhutan. Mark Jenkins tours the tiny mountainous nation in "Hidden Kingdom."

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK JENKINS

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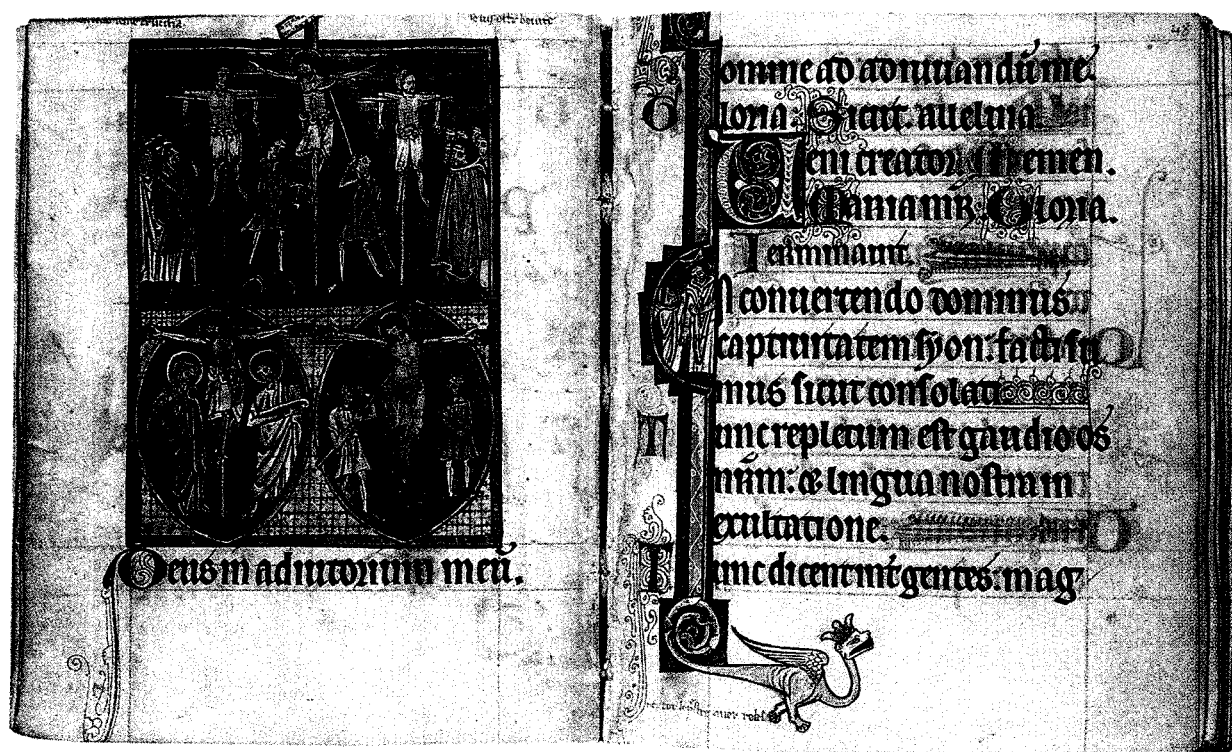
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## BOOKS

**Editor's Choice:** Finding the private lives of medieval men and women in the pages of their prayer books

# Life in the Margins

BY BENJAMIN SCHWARZ

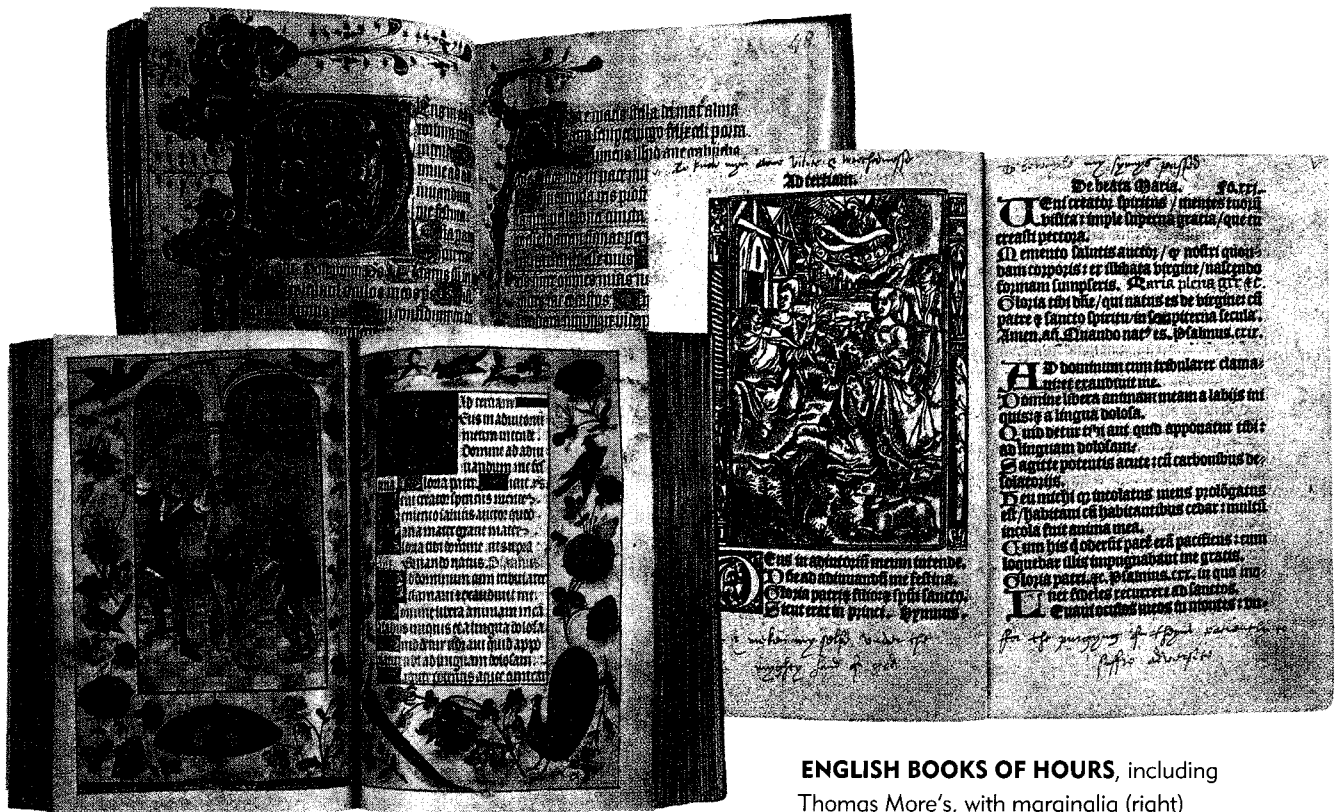
The Cambridge historian Eamon Duffy has a genius for recovering worlds we have lost. In 1992 he published the revisionist *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580*, a gigantic and subtle work of historical anthropology and a best seller in the U.K., in which he revealed the pull and vitality of pre-Reformation English Catholicism. His meticulous and beguiling reconstruction, along with his exploration of the psychological and spiritual devastation caused by the Tudors' wrecking of the physical culture of the late-medieval Church, demonstrated that the Reformation was "a great cultural hiatus, which had dug a ditch, deep and dividing, between the English people and their past"—a past that over merely three generations became a foreign country, impossible for the English to regard as

their own. The book stirred the English popular and scholarly mind from a historical and cultural complacency bred of Protestant and Whiggish triumphalism. In *Marking the Hours*, Duffy has pulled off the near-impossible: He lets us penetrate—perforce fleetingly and partially—the inner lives of women and men who lived when the world was over half a thousand years younger.

*The Stripping of the Altars* drew on a dizzying array of sources and concentrated on the externals of medieval Christianity: sacraments, altars, processions, images. In this far more tightly focused book, Duffy examines a small, concrete body of evidence in order to illuminate the history of prayer—which, he acknowledges, "is as difficult to write as the history of sex, and for some of the same reasons"—and its relationship to the development

of intimacy, interiority, and individuality. His source material is the Book of Hours—a devotional assemblage for the laity, first compiled in the 13th century. The book included psalms, prayers, biblical passages, the calendar of saints' days, the Office of the Dead, and other set texts, almost exclusively in Latin. These were intended to be recited in a whisper, largely in private, at each of the eight monastic "hours" into which each day's worship was divided. Books of Hours were originally owned exclusively by the rich and largely by women (the books were commonly passed down from mother to daughter, and remained strongly associated with women throughout their history). By the late Middle Ages they had become by far the most widely used texts; the small volumes, often cupped in the hands, are a ubiquitous prop in medieval and





ENGLISH BOOKS OF HOURS, including  
Thomas More's, with marginalia (right)

Renaissance paintings, in which they serve as an immediately recognizable symbol of prayer and the internal life.

The study of Books of Hours was confined mostly to art historians—the finest volumes, sumptuously illuminated and hand-scripted, contain some of the supreme paintings of the late Middle Ages. But in a feat of inspired scholarship, Duffy has turned to the very features of these books that have rankled those who study them as works of art: the jottings in the margins and on the flyleaves made by their owners, hitherto regarded as defacements at worst and proof of provenance at best. He's examined the marginalia of a small number of the extant Books of Hours made for English use (some 800 handwritten volumes survive, along with a few thousand early printed editions), and has discovered “a series of unexpected windows into the hearts and souls of the men and women who long ago had used these books to pray.”

It's surprising that previous scholars didn't use the Book of Hours as Duffy has,

because, although he doesn't discuss this in *Marking the Hours*, for decades historians have asserted rather than probed its social, spiritual, and even psychological significance. Medievalists have recognized that the Book of Hours—“a script for the drama of personal religion,” as Duffy nicely puts it—was linked to the broader movement toward intro-



**MARKING THE HOURS: English People and Their Prayers, 1240-1570**  
by Eamon Duffy  
Yale

spective devotion, especially among prosperous women, following the Fourth Lateran Council (1215); the move was exemplified in the council's decision to alter confession from a ceremony of public penance to a private dialogue, followed by private self-correction. Engaging in speculation as squishy as it is fascinating, some scholars have seen those developments as engendering, in turn, a deeper and more complex internal life and new conceptions of privacy among the educated laity. (That at once stimulating and exasperating monument of French medievalism, *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World*, tantalizingly asserts that the habit of

intimate and meditative prayer that the Book of Hours encouraged “profoundly influenced the most secret aspects of private life,” but, alas, fails to tell us how.)

Duffy largely eschews such speculation and instead concentrates on the nitty-gritty. The Book of Hours was in many cases its owner's most expensive and most intimate possession, carried about tucked in a sleeve or belt. Although a deeply personal artifact, the book, soon grubby and well thumbed, was also shared—known as “the primer” in England, it was the primary volume children used in learning to read. Both the way the books were handled and the scribbles that filled them signified the permeability of the secular and religious life, especially among women (a point Mary Erler stresses in her *Women, Reading, and Piety in Late Medieval England*), and also the intermingling of the quotidian and the eternal, the individual and the communal, even the Christian and the pagan. One woman, in her marginalia, laments the destruction of a shrine and details the contents of her linen closet. The books are crammed with pressed flowers, recipes, notes on debts and rents due, charms and incantations, souvenirs

of pilgrimages, affectionate messages from family members (the young Catherine Parr, the future queen, playfully jotted to her uncle, "Wen you do on thys loke / Pray you remember wo wrote thys in your boke"; it's the equivalent of every bad yearbook rhyme), dates of marriages and deaths ("my moder departed to God"), and often very precise information about the times of births, to aid the casting of horoscopes. Moreover, these prayer books, a means to converse with God, testify to the vicissitudes of temporal power. Richard III's book was taken at Bosworth Field; the victor, Henry VII, gave it to his mother, who scratched off Richard's name and wrote her own on the flyleaf. A onetime devoted court friend of Catherine of Aragon blotted out the queen's autograph after Henry VIII repudiated her.

Duffy is loath to draw overelaborate conclusions based on what he calls these "traces of lives." Even if at times, confronted with the apparently modern sentiments these notes express, he feels as though the centuries between himself and the books' owners had been "swallowed up," he adheres to the approach advocated by the French medievalist Philippe Braunstein (whom he never mentions):

Anything that brings us closer to the intimate feelings of people who lived centuries ago tempts us to abolish the distance that stands between us and a lost world. The trap of modernity is to assume that nothing is ever new, that men expressing themselves in private speak the same language across the centuries.

Occasionally the books offer far more than a trace of that elusive quarry Duffy calls "the innermost thoughts and most sacred privacies of late medieval people." While imprisoned in the Tower, awaiting his trial and eventual execution, Thomas More pored over and annotated his Book of Hours. Its remarkable survival (it was in private hands until 1929) allows us, as Duffy writes with forgivable hyperbole, to watch More "in the very act of praying." Duffy's scrupulous exegesis of More's poignant notes about the verses

in the psalms that captured his attention and of the prayer More wrote in the margins ("Gyve me thy grace good lord / To sett the world at nought ...") clearly shows a devout and isolated man using his Book of Hours in his struggle "to come to terms with a frightening fate."

**The Senses in Late Medieval England**, by C. M. Woolgar (Yale), is another book that summons a lost world. Perceiving reality in ways profoundly different from the modern experience, the men and women of the late Middle Ages attached moral qualities to colors, sounds, tastes—even rocks—and they saw a bright red and a bright blue as more similar than a pale red and a bright red. In a triumph of historical empathy and imagination, Woolgar mines an array of English sources—household accounts; literary, artistic, and architectural works; archaeological evidence—and deploys the insights of anthropology and linguistics to illuminate aspects of daily medieval life and assess the religious, philosophical, material, and psychological forces that shaped the ways medieval people experienced their physical world. Yale University Press, the preeminent house for English medieval history, publishes both this and Duffy's book, and both exemplify Yale's remarkably intelligent and well-designed use of carefully reproduced, incisively annotated illustrations.

Woolgar could have lapsed into the flighty and speculative, but he uses the same sober, almost materialist method, anchored in what he calls "a history of the day-to-day," that served him well in *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*—a book in which he married an exquisitely detailed description of the daily life of the gentry and nobility to an analysis of the social and material forces that influenced it over time. With a precision born of his curatorial training, a dexterous imagination, a sensitive weighing of often-confusing and generally sparse evidence, and a conscientious effort to abjure the condescension of posterity, Woolgar allows the reader to enter an intensely alien mentality. ■

Benjamin Schwarz is *The Atlantic's* literary editor and national editor.

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## BOOKS

The “greatest sports book ever written” is a mystery to Americans, for reasons all too revealing of national character.

# Bowling Alone

BY JOSEPH O’NEILL

To all but a tiny fraction of Americans, cricket is among the most mysterious and unimportant of sizeable human activities. The combination of triviality and obscurity is what’s significant. Thus the game of curling—in which a smooth, heavy, orbicular rock is launched across ice and escorted to its target by a pair of furiously sweeping ushers—may be cricket’s equal in its apparent inconsequentiality, but at least it is very quickly understandable and, thanks to its appearance in the Winter Olympics, briefly commands our sniggering attention once every four years. Cricket, on the other hand, is never on mainstream television—not even during the sport’s own quadrennial festival, the Cricket World Cup—and is never,



even when watched for some while, anything other than baffling: Cricketers on a field are to your typical American onlooker as arcane as M’ikmaq hieroglyphs scratched on birch bark.

I know this for a fact because for years I have played cricket here, in the United States. From time to time, as I have stood at my fielder’s station on the boundary of the playing field, a passerby has asked me what is going on, and I have attempted to explain; and each time, the conversation has ended with my interlocutor giving a humorous shake of the head and professing—not without a certain pride, I have sensed—his enduring confusion. The oddity, of course, is that cricket is the biggest bat-and-ball game in the world. It is played or followed by fathomless

millions. Kids—even American kids—have no problem picking up the basics of the pastime in the course of a single sunny afternoon. This summer, I asked my two oldest sons—gum-chewing, DC-wearing Manhattanites aged 7 and 6—if they wanted to play some cricket; they agreed, and chattered about it to their classroom buddies. Before long, a group of seven or eight kids from PS 3 were batting and bowling once a week at the cement playground at Hudson and Horatio. You might still be able to see traces of the wicket they chalked onto the wall.

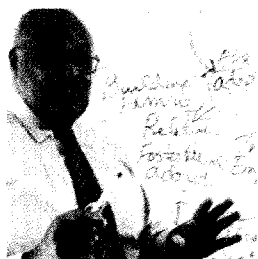
The general American mystification with cricket, then, is not merely anomalous but a tad perverse—you might even say it’s the stuff of a national blind spot (“a region of understanding in which

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**Sharon Rohrbach**

SAVING NEWBORNS  
THROUGH HOME VISITS

As a neo-natal nurse in St. Louis, Sharon Rohrbach saw too many delicate newborns leave the hospital only to return sicker and more fragile than before. So she created the *Nurses for Newborns Foundation* to bring nurses into the homes of economically disadvantaged mothers with high-risk infants to provide care, educate and support parents, and reduce abuse, neglect and injuries.



**H. Gene Jones**

BOOSTING ACHIEVEMENT  
THROUGH THE ARTS

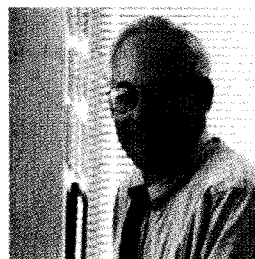
After a career of turning failing businesses into profitable enterprises, Gene Jones turned his attention to lagging student performance. He created *Opening Minds through the Arts*, a K-8 program that integrates arts into core curricula as a way to boost achievement and improve at-risk children's chances for success. The program operates in 36 Tucson schools, involving 17,000 students.



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**Donald Berwick**

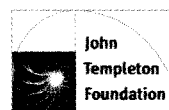
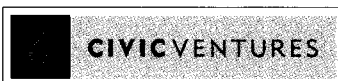
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## Quirk • o • lo • gy

(n.) 1. The quirky science of everyday life

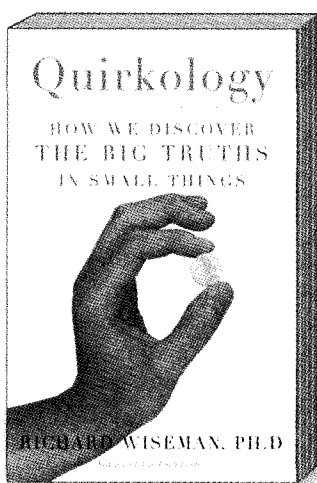
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one's intuition and judgment always fail," according to my dictionary). Well, what of it? Why *not* turn a blind eye to a complicated, time-consuming, weird-looking sport? And don't we have our own game involving sticks and balls and hot summer days?

A possibly eccentric but, I would suggest, far-reaching response to this line of argument would be as follows: To be deprived of knowledge of cricket is to be deprived, at the very least, of a full appreciation of C. L. R. James's strange and wonderful *Beyond a Boundary*, the American publication of which occurred almost a quarter century ago. The original, British publication came in 1963, and ever since, the book has gone down pretty well with the critics. "To say 'the best cricket book ever written' is piffingly inadequate praise," blurbs the most current U.K. paperback edition, which quotes this further encomium:

Great claims have been made for [*Beyond a Boundary*]: that it is the greatest sports book ever written; that it brings the outsider a privileged insight into West Indian culture; that it is a severe examination of the colonial condition. All are true.

Such praise cannot be dismissed as self-serving hyperbole: Derek Walcott has written of "a noble book," and V. S. Naipaul, in the days before his glorious unpleasantness had fully manifested itself (needless to say, he eventually turned on James), rejoiced at "one of the finest and most finished books to come out of the West Indies."

In this country, however, *Beyond a Boundary* is barely read. Although there now exists a veritable academic industry devoted to the study and celebration of James's brilliant and idiosyncratic political-historical-literary oeuvre, very little attention is paid to the meditative, cricket-saturated memoir—if that's what it is—for which he is most widely known. The reason is that its contents are largely incomprehensible. An anonymous prefatory "Note on Cricket" in the American edition states that the

themes of this book reach, as its title suggests, far beyond the boundaries of the cricket field, and no detailed knowledge of the game is needed to appreciate their implications.

That's a good one. The truth is that unless you know cricket, you haven't got a snowball's chance in Port of Spain of knowing what C. L. R. James—whose triply initialed name belongs in a cricket scorebook—means to say. For example, in the book's opening section, he describes for two rhapsodic pages a

Trinidadian master of cutting named Arthur Jones. I know exactly what he's on about because I know cricket; indeed, from the age of 10 (in Europe, then in the U.S.A.), I have hit countless

cut shots through the segment between point and third man. *You*, on the other hand, almost certainly wouldn't know a cut from a shaving nick, or a third man from Harry Lime.

Of course, it's quite possible to enjoy a piece of writing while remaining at a loss about much of what it means: Think of the murky pleasure to be derived from leafing through, say, the poems of Neruda with nothing but a smattering of Mediterraneanese (that quasi-language comprising remembered bits of French, Italian, and Spanish) to draw on.

The foreignness of *Beyond a Boundary* is not this extreme. For one thing, it is written in English—and grippingly so, for James writes with a philosopher's love of exactness. For another thing, it contains passages that make familiar sense. When, for example, the author recalls the agonizing matter of his choosing which cricket club to join—this is colonial Trinidad in the '20s, and the membership of each club accords with a particular shade of skin color—we recognize the casual self-excoriation involved in the statement "I became one of those dark men whose 'surest sign of ... having arrived is the fact that he keeps company with people lighter in complexion than himself." And when he discusses race and memory—a discussion that includes the aside that T. S. Eliot "is of special value

### BEYOND A BOUNDARY

by C. L. R. James  
Duke

to me in that in him I find more often than elsewhere, and beautifully and precisely stated, things to which I am completely opposed"—or, say, his obsession with *Vanity Fair* (the satirical Thackeray novel, not the self-satirizing magazine), or tells the story of how his grandfather saved the day at the sugarcane factory, we know where we are.

But such moments are no more than clearings in a forest: If James expands his cultural references, it is only in order that he can return us, with uncompromising specificity, still deeper into the thickets of cricket. For instance:

This modern theory that the leg-glance does not pay is a fetish, first because you can place the ball, and secondly if you can hook then the life of long-leg is one long frustration.

He kept the ball well up, swinging in late from outside the off-stump to middle-and-off or thereabouts.

To the length ball he gets back and forces Grimmett away between mid-wicket and mid-on or between mid-wicket and square-leg.

At no point, it should be stated, is James engaging in gratuitous sports talk; these technicalities are integral to human portraits of certain cricketers, who themselves shed light on politics and aesthetics, which in turn are illuminants of ... cricket. For it is James's elaborately articulated claim that cricket *simpliciter* is a worthy end of inquiry—indeed, is an art on a par with theater, ballet, opera, and dance. "What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?" is the central, famous question asked by the book; and it's a question that by its very terms argues for an expansion, and elevation, of our understanding of this sport.

It would be easy, indeed boringly so, to poke fun at such an enterprise (can there be a more old-fashioned theoretical quest than the true definition of art?). Much more interesting is the question of what underlies James's unusual and passionate attempt to upset established cultural hierarchies and categories. An answer, as James makes delightfully clear in the first chapter of *Beyond a Boundary*, begins in 1907 with a window

## Edmund Wilson

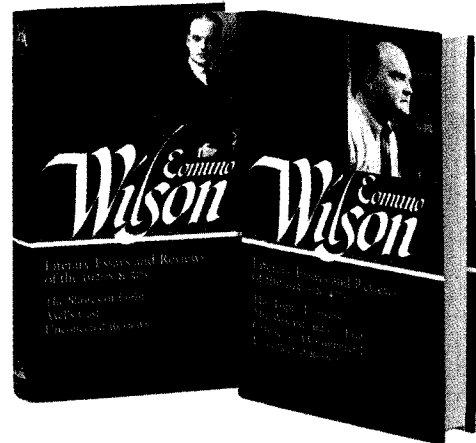
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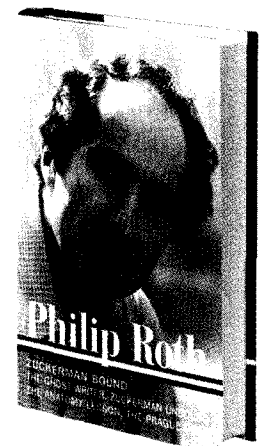
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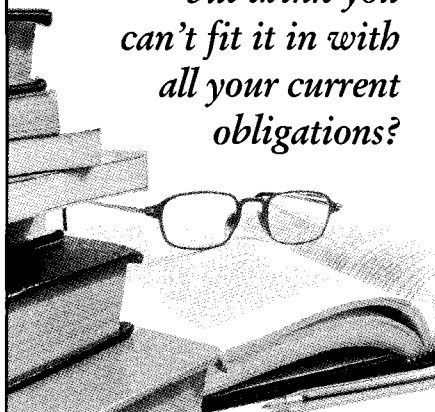
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in Tunapuna, a small town in provincial Trinidad.

The window in question belonged to the James family, in a house “superbly situated, exactly behind the wicket” of the recreation ground on which local men played cricket. By standing on a chair, a 6-year-old boy could for hours watch black men dressed in white repetitively organizing themselves into mysterious patterns on a green sunlit space, and could hear the sounds that not long before had enchanted a school-boy named Stephen Dedalus:

and from here and from there through the quiet air the sound of the cricket bats: pick, pack, pock, puck: like drops of water in a fountain falling softly in the brimming bowl.

It was at his window that James also received some of his “strongest early impressions of personality in society,”

of the monasteries, particularly in the small towns.

The window, then, gave onto cricket, which in due course gave onto wider, more complex prospects in which the athletic and the beautiful and the political were fused. The fusion was reinforced at school: James was the youngest boy to win an exhibition to Queen’s Royal College, in Port of Spain, a colonial institution at which the future Marxist radical, Pan-Africanist, and “declared enemy of British imperialism and all its ways and works” acquired a lifelong veneration of Thomas Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby School and principal creator of the Victorian public-school ethos. This Puritan ethos, in James’s admiring (if not downright starry-eyed) view, ensured, among other good things, that “cricket and football provided a meeting place for the moral outlook of the dissenting middle classes and the athletic instincts

## There is an irony here, namely that cricket was, as it happens, the first modern American team sport.

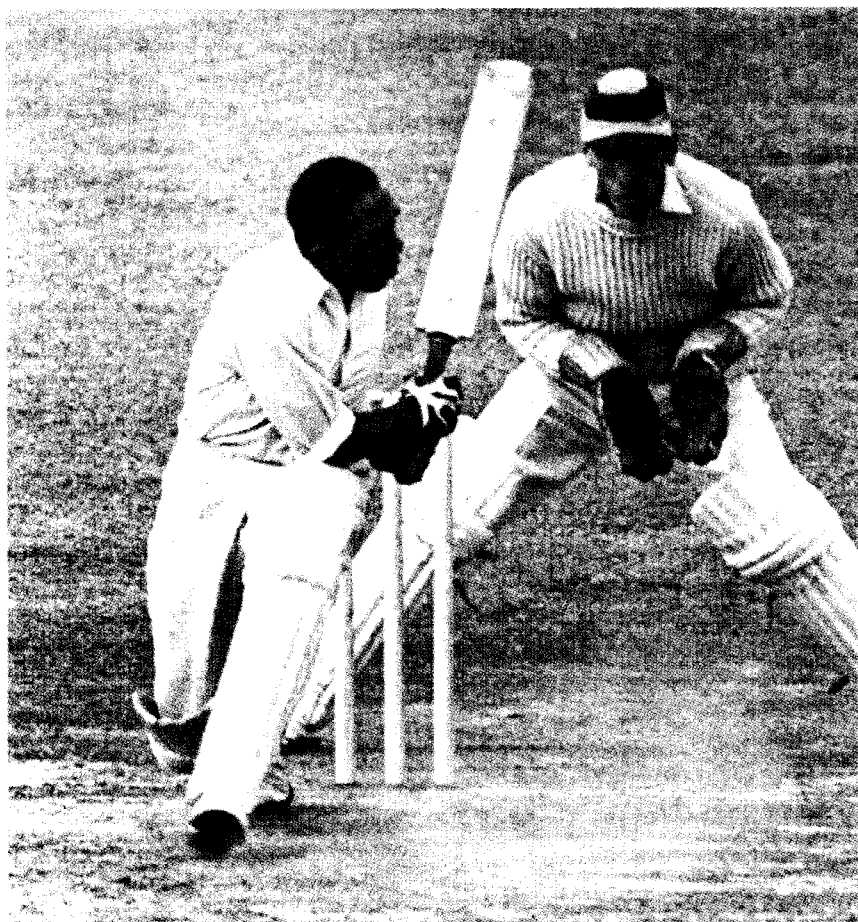
noticing in particular how his neighbor, a terrifying no-good character named Matthew Bondman, found respite from his “pitiable existence as an individual” because he could bat. The Jameses were above the likes of Bondman. True, their Cousin Nancy remembered her days as a slave before the 1834 abolition, but C.L.R. was the son of a teacher, and the teacher was the son of a man who rose from “the mass of poverty, dirt, ignorance and vice” to become a pan boiler on a sugar estate (usually a white man’s job) and a wearer of top hats and frock coats to church. The experience of growing up in an atmosphere of ever-threatened respectability led James to observe—a typically erudite sweep across time and space, this—

I believe I understand pretty much how the average sixteenth-century Puritan in England felt amidst the decay which followed the dissolution

of the aristocracy.” He read and cherished Thomas Hughes’s *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, and on the college cricket field, he learned never to question the umpire’s decision, never to cheat, never to complain or make excuses: “This code became the moral framework of my existence. It has never left me.”

This quaint indisposition to self-pity stood James in good stead in later years. It also, along with his ideological inclination to analyze society in economic terms, underpinned an instinctive distaste for racial partisanship. The racism he saw in Trinidad cricket, he coolly recalled, “was in its time and place a natural response to local social conditions, did very little harm and sharpened up the game.”

Stiff upper lip notwithstanding, the young James neglected his studies and, much to his retrospective relief, did not (unlike Naipaul) leave Trinidad on an



**THE GREAT** Trinidadian cricketer Learie Constantine (left) was C. L. R. James's sporting and intellectual mentor, and a key figure in *Beyond a Boundary*.

Oxbridge scholarship. For about 10 years, he taught school and wrote journalism; autodidactically deepened his passion for literature and history; and immersed himself in the ragtag but highly charged world of Trinidad cricket, an amusement offering modes of self-realization that were simply unavailable elsewhere in the culture:

Social and political passions, denied normal outlets, expressed themselves so fiercely in cricket (and other games) precisely because they were games.

He was a handy batsman and bowler, which brought him into contact with the superior class of local players. One of these, Learie Constantine, who became a renowned club professional in Lancashire, inspired James to think politically and, as James put it, cracked his shell of 19th-century intellectualism.

Most consequentially, Constantine (later Lord Constantine, eminent also as a British public servant) advised him to go to England. The year was 1932, and C. L. R. James was a 31-year-old nobody. In England, this was to change dramatically.

James's career took off on an amazing, even berserk trajectory. Constantine, a much-loved figure in Lancashire, was in great demand for public speaking, and he asked the new arrival to share the load. In this way, James quickly developed a reputation for cleverness and exotic charm. Very soon he published (with Constantine's money) his first book, *The Life of Captain Cipriani*, also known as *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*; landed a job as a cricket correspondent for *The Guardian*; published a novel, *Minty Alley*, that he'd written in the West Indies (it was, he claimed, the first novel by a black West

Indian to appear in England); wrote a play about Toussaint L'Ouverture that was staged in the West End with none other than Paul Robeson playing the lead; published a study of the Haitian slave uprising, *The Black Jacobins*, which half a century later was described by Edward Said as a "brilliantly written and stirring masterpiece of historical writing—surely among the great books of 20th-century scholarship"; and, concurrently to all these literary endeavors, became fatefully embroiled in political theory and activism. He joined the Marxist Group—a Trotskyist organization—and wrote *World Revolution*, a history of the Communist International that attracted the admiration of Trotsky himself.

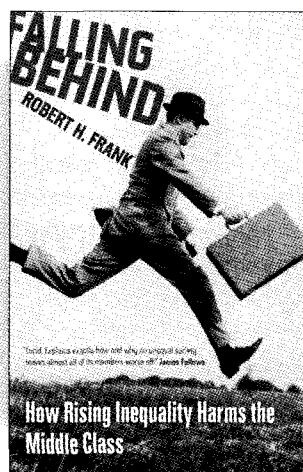
It bears mentioning that James loathed Stalin and his Soviet Union, suggesting in 1937, in the teeth of much comradely opinion, that the dictator's "corrupt and limited personality" ideally equipped him to act as a "second or successor to a Hitler or a Mussolini." Mussolini was a particular target of disdain for James, who on top of everything else was the chair of the International African Friends of Abyssinia, and duly became active in the International African Service Bureau.

*Beyond a Boundary*, however, barely refers to any of this. The chapters devoted to James's English period (1932–38) are in effect a study of his mentor Constantine's development as a league cricketer and as a human being. Rather than dwell on the next dramatic lurch in his life—his move to America—James veers into a detailed, statistic-heavy, and sparkingly personal assessment of George Headley, the great Jamaican batsman. (James's portraits of cricketers have the urgency of submissions confronting a deep injustice.) Then, having mentioned as an aside that in 1941 he began to question the premises of Trotskyism, he articulates a theory about the conjunction of the popular demands for sports and for democracy, from ancient Greece to the overthrow of Napoleon III. And after that, he embarks on a very lengthy and nostalgic study of W. G. Grace, the legendary Victorian cricketer whose stature and effect can be



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understood only if one were to imagine a golfing colossus in whom the charismatic and sporting qualities of Arnold Palmer, Seve Ballesteros, and Tiger Woods have been compounded. It's fascinating stuff, yes, terrific social history as well as biography, but it's hardly accessible or, on the face of it, of terrible relevance to the American reader.

There is an irony here, namely that cricket was, as it happens, the first modern American team sport—which is to say, a sport properly organized and monitored. Benjamin Franklin was very interested in cricket, and by 1779 at least two teams, Brooklyn and Greenwich, were turning out regularly. More teams sprang up, and in 1838, the first formally constituted club, the St. George Club of New York City, came into being. Matches for money were played: In 1844, a Toronto team won a \$1,000 purse in front of several thousand spectators in New York. Most of the players were British expats, but in Philadelphia, significant numbers of homegrown Americans took up the sport as an elite pastime and produced great cricketers and great clubs. Earlier this year, I played in Philadelphia at the Merion and Germantown and Philadelphia cricket clubs, where for a few weeks a year the tennis nets are stowed away and the gigantic, magnificently maintained lawns are restored to their original use.

My own club, Staten Island C. C., dates back to 1872, and is the oldest continuously active cricket club in the country. For almost a century and a quarter it has made its home at Walker Park, a little ground on the island's north shore. Walker Park and its cricketers once formed a hub of New York society, hosting fêtes champêtres and lawn tennis and attracting coverage in the sports and society pages.

These days, the social cachet of the club is zero. It's not that we're a particularly disreputable bunch, but that our sport overwhelmingly belongs to newly arrived immigrants from the Caribbean or South Asia. With very few exceptions (among them, years ago in Texas,

J. M. Coetzee), Englishmen and Australians and South Africans don't bother to unpack their bats and whites, on account (I'm guessing) of the small, scruffy, thickly grassed and weedy fields that we play on, most of which are situated in public parks in downscale neighborhoods and come as a shock to a newcomer used to better things. He sees a playing track made not of turf but of coconut matting stretched over clay, and he sees a rough, overgrown outfield that undermines his notion of what batting is all about: hitting the ball along the ground, over beautifully mowed grass. There's a baseball diamond in a corner of the field, indifferent cars roar nearby, and the players seem a little lost. He sees, in short, a game lacking in the orderliness and visual splendor that offer an alternative to the graceless wider world: To play cricket properly is to submit not only to complex athletic disciplines—there are scores of ways to make runs, and scores of ways to bowl the ball, and scores of ways to position the fielders—but, for the duration of a hot day, to an altered sense of time.

Although arrived from England, I have played for many seasons in and around New York, and if the experience has been only roughly and intermittently blissful, it's always been fun. The recent inflow of West Indians and, especially, Indians, Pakistanis, and Sri Lankans has made the game more popular now than at any other point in American history. There are well over a hundred clubs in the New York metropolitan area, for example, and substantial concentrations in Florida and California. Occasionally somebody dreams of capitalizing on this historic influx and schemes to set up proper facilities and proper institutions. Nothing significant has come of this yet, partly because the national administration of the sport is crippled by infighting and incompetence, and partly because cricket is still regarded as a joke by the powers that be.

Staten Island C. C.'s heyday ended when the 20th century began, on account—or so my reading of the newspaper reports from that time suggests—of a rivalrous golf club established by the



cricket club's members. The traditional and more general explanation is that cricket found itself in competition with, and lost out to, baseball—another game drenched in memory and in sensual impressions of youth, of summer, of recurrence. Various sociological theories have emerged as to why this happened, and underlying much of them is the notion, more implied than expressed, that to get to the bottom of the matter is to get to the bottom of America's mystical, exceptional identity. As Jacques Barzun famously suggested, "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball."

In any case, C. L. R. James did not see a single cricket match in the 15 years he lived in America. This isn't surprising, because he was busy. Arriving in 1938 to lecture on the Negro struggle, he stayed on as a full-time agitator. His activities included meeting Trotsky in Mexico, helping out sharecroppers on strike in Missouri (his suggested tactics

anticipated those of the civil-rights movement), and of course putting pen to paper: Installments of his *Notes on Dialectics*—an analysis of dialectical materialism that is still very readable—would be sent to Detroit autoworkers, who would read it and sit up all night discussing Hegel. James spent a lot of energy revising his revolutionary views and affiliations. He quit the Socialist Workers' Party for the Workers' Party, and set up a faction named, like a bad rock band, the Johnson-Forest Tendency, which itself then rejoined the SWP and finally gave rise to a group named, like a cool rock band, the Correspondence Publishing Committee.

This merry-go-round came to a sudden stop in 1952. James was arrested by the INS and taken to Ellis Island to await deportation hearings. Surrounded by "sailors, 'isolatoes,' renegades and castaways from all parts of the world," he feverishly wrote a critical study of Herman Melville in which his fellow

detainees are likened to the crew of the *Pequod* (whose journey is that of "modern civilization seeking its destiny") and Ahab to a henchman of state capitalism. Rather curiously, and to the distaste of some of his admirers, James ended the book with a personal plea for American citizenship. He sent copies of the work to every member of Congress, hoping they'd buy into his conception of a United States that might accommodate an alien of his sort. They didn't. James was deported.

He lived in England for five years, and then went back to Trinidad, where as a campaigning journalist and editor he was instrumental in securing the captaincy of the West Indian cricket team for a black man, Frank Worrell—not because of his skin color, but because of his personal merits. The controversy is movingly documented in the last chapters of *Beyond a Boundary* and ends happily, with the West Indians, through their cricket captain Worrell, finally making "a public entry into the comity of nations."

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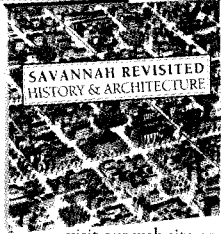
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James eventually returned to London, holing up in a flat in Brixton. As he grew into a wizened, frail old charmer, he began to acquire the iconic status he enjoys today. He died in 1989. His reputation (speaking of the *Pequod*) is an extraordinary ship in which Marxists, cricket buffs, black activists, Pan-Africanists, and lovers of belles lettres sail together, albeit fractiously.

In this country, the Jamesian focus is primarily on his U.S. years; the Melville book is particularly hot property, not least because of its spooky prescience about the workings of the Bush administration. More interestingly, it has been seized on by academics in the world of American studies. They see in its methodology and stateless viewpoint

cricket to blur boundaries between white and black, colonized and colonizer, ancient and modern, political and social, he stages a brilliant attack on "that categorization and specialization, that division of the human personality, which is the greatest curse of our time." His concern was profound and by no means abstract. Are there more-consequential divisions of human personality than the ones currently imposed by religion and nationality?

The trouble, of course, is that Americans, even if they are Americanists, can't read *Beyond a Boundary*. They can follow the words, but with what prospect of understanding them? How could their reading not be riddled with misconceptions, guesses, gray areas? E. P. Thompson

## "What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?" is the central, famous question asked by *Beyond a Boundary*.

a pioneering effort to reject the insular, exceptionalist narratives by which America explains itself. They see, that is, a way of moving beyond multiculturalism—which implicitly reinforces the notion of the United States as a place of unique value—to so-called postnationalism.

Biographically, James is a good fit for postnationalists. He drifted from one country to another, a vagrancy paralleled by his refusal to submit to the disciplinary jurisdictions in which he also wandered: Not many thinkers hold Thackeray and Marx in equal estimation, or regard games and politics as comparable vessels of ethical and social values. But the trouble with the American postnationalists, as at least one scholar, Christopher Gair, has pointed out, is that they focus on James's American output; and in doing so, they linger in the very American mythological space they are supposedly trying to lead us out of. What they should be doing instead is reading *Beyond a Boundary*.

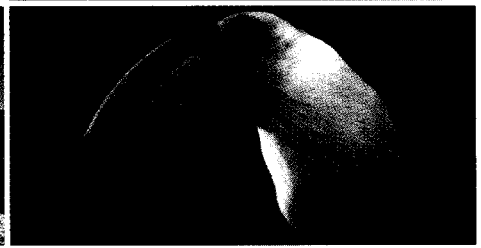
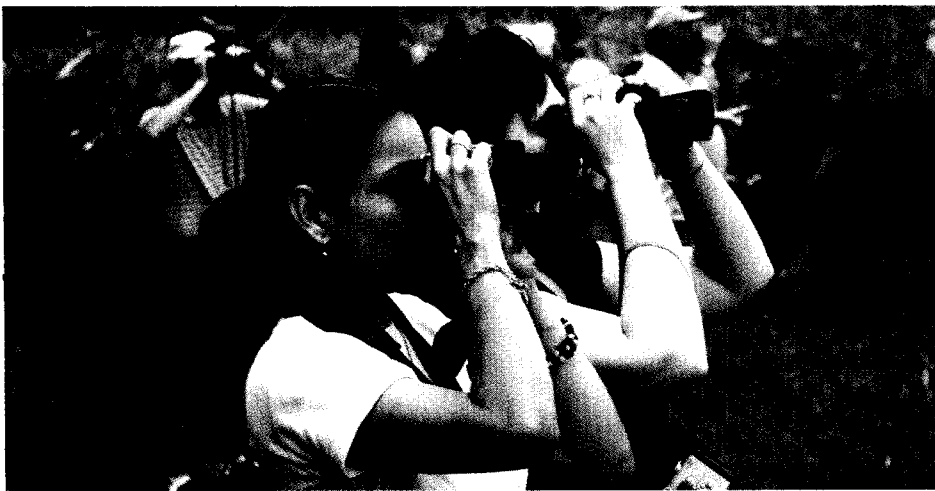
For this book is where James offers the most complex, literary, and heartfelt synthesis of his preoccupations. Using

once remarked, "I'm afraid that American theorists will not understand this, but the clue to everything lies in [James's] proper appreciation of the game of cricket." Unfortunately, he was right.

Now, it's true that cricket is not quite as remote as it once was. It is the national sport of India, a new world power; and earlier this year *The New York Times* ran a front-page story about the murder of the Pakistan cricket coach, Bob Woolmer (who, it turned out, was not murdered at all). It's also true that to write about cricket in this country is no longer to surrender automatically to the hegemony of American culture; until quite recently, the word *cricketer*, when typed into my computer, would be underscored by a squiggly red line. But the mystery of cricket is still equivalent to the mystery of the Other.

It's a shame. It puts C. L. R. James's greatest book beyond a boundary. It also raises James's big question in another form: What do they know of America who only America know? ▀

Joseph O'Neill's novel *Netherland* will be published in 2008 by Pantheon.



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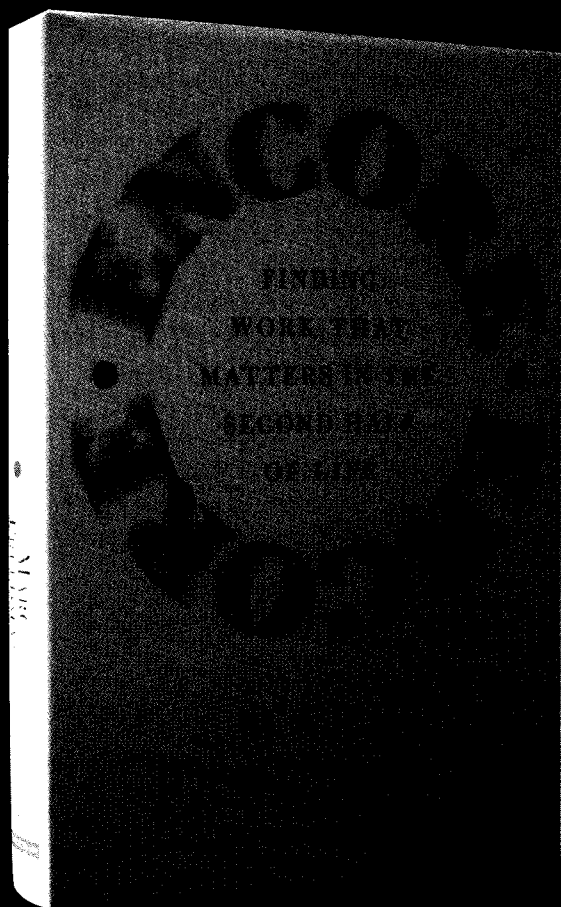
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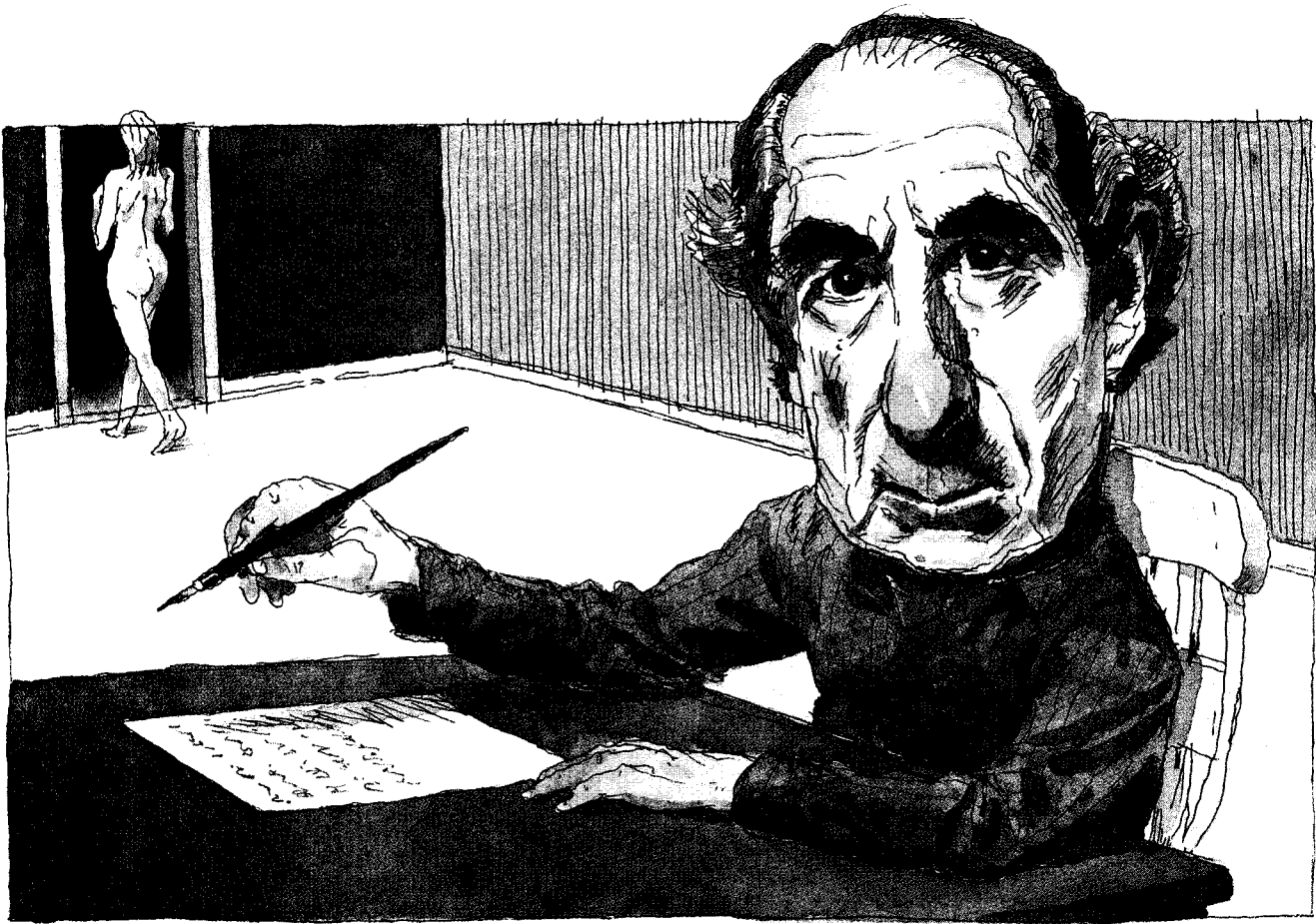
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# Zuckerman Undone

BY CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Having assumed the title of this very slight novel to be drawn from the famous stage direction in *Hamlet*, I was quite braced for some Rothian reflections on the Oedipal, with plenty of reluctant and dutiful visits to wheezed-out Jewish fathers in the wilderness of postindustrial New Jersey, and to the grisly wives and mothers who had drained them dry and made them into husks. But the reference is actually to another sort of father figure: a dead and almost-forgotten writer called E. I. Lonoff, who had been a hero and mentor to the young Nathan Zuckerman. According to Lonoff's relict, a terminal brain-cancer patient named

Amy Bellette, the great man had once instructed her to take down the following aperçu: "Reading/writing people, we are finished, we are ghosts witnessing the end of the literary era."

By the time that he encounters this rather ordinary valediction, which occurs in the second half of the book, Zuckerman has been revealed as highly disposed to hear it. He has been stuck on the top of a Massachusetts mountain for 11 years, seeing almost nobody and ignoring the news and, by the sound of it, not getting much work done. His prostate has turned against him in

a big way, forcing him to wear Pampers and to endure the regular humiliation of feeling sodden. Returning to New York in the hope of an operation to repair his urinary arrangements (a hope that proves vain), he is geezerishly astonished by the prevalence of cell phones and by the general cultural barbarity. But this feeling of nausea

and alienation is by no means enough to quell his excitement when he notices one of those apartment-swap ads in *The New York Review of Books*, and sees that some young couple wants a place just like his in the rural fastnesses.

**EXIT GHOST**  
by Philip Roth  
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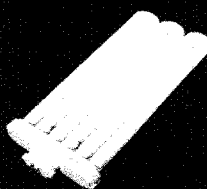
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Am I by any chance boring you? I promise that I have done my best to put a light skip into this summary of a weary trudge. Roth's own method of alleviation we can see coming a mile off: The female half of the want-ad couple will turn out to be a fox, offering the ghost of a chance that Zuckerman's flaccid and piss-soaked member can be revived. And so it proves. While he maneuvers to stay in the big city and see how it plays out with Jamie and her slavish husband, Billy, he may as well defend E. I. Lonoff's reputation from being ruined by an ambitious young author who wants to tell the deceased author's story—a story that may well include an episode of incest. Zuckerman is in no mood for cocky young men in any case, but he also doesn't think the vulgar public can be trusted to separate the work from the life. So, as a service to literature and the noble standards of a dying breed, he does his best to sabotage the Lonoff biography, and the biographer.

Some protracted mourning for the late George Plimpton, and some authorial recollections of Jewish establishment "denunciation of my first published stories as sinister manifestations of 'Jewish self-hatred,'" remove all doubt about the autobiographical character of the narrator. As with *Exit Ghost's* immediate predecessor, *Everyman*, one gets an ever-stronger impression that Roth has degraded the Eros-Thanatos dialectic of some of his earlier work and is now using his fiction, first to kill off certain characters and to shoot the wounded, and second to give himself something to masturbate about. The self-abusive parts are contained in a play within the novel, written by Zuckerman under the title of *He and She*. Here is a section of the dialogue between the vixen Jamie and the hated (by Zuckerman) young biographer Richard Kliman, whom he believes to be her secret lover:

SHE: Richard, I'm married.

HE: I know that. Billy's the guy to marry and I'm the guy to fuck. You tell me why all the time. "It's so thick. The base is so thick. The head is so beautiful. This is just the kind I like ..."



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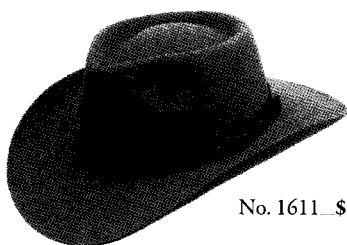
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SHE: Get away from me. Get out of here right now. Billy's coming home. Get out. Get out of my house or I'll call the police.

HE: Wait'll the police see you in just that top and those shorts. They won't leave either. You've got the prettiest cunt and the basest instincts.

More fervid perhaps in its tone, this is the dumbest sex scene that Roth has written since *Sabbath's Theater*. (One guy jerking off in a bleak woodland over his mistress's grave? Maybe. But a whole host?) However, at least such material sparks his flagging interest, which is more than can be said for his characters. Zuckerman asks Billy about Jamie's upbringing:

And so he told me, lavishly expatiating on her accomplishments: about Kinkaid, the exclusive private school in Houston from which she'd graduated valedictorian; about her stellar academic career at Harvard, where she graduated summa cum laude; about River Oaks, the wealthy Houston neighborhood where her family lived; about the Houston Country Club, where she played tennis and swam and had come out as a debutante against her will; about the conventional mother she tried so hard to accommodate and the difficult father she could never please ...

Are you absolutely *sure* that I am not boring you? The dull reported speech with which Roth economizes (so much easier to do the background of WASP-dread secondhand, rather than evoking it directly as he used to do) is limpid and engaging when set beside the great swaths of soliloquy-as-dialogue in which the remainder of *Exit Ghost* is bogged down. (One of Billy's later answers, about old and new money in the Greater Houston area, and its relation to anti-Semitism, goes on for almost two and a half pages. We are not spared further deep thoughts about country clubs. *Everything* is a cliché, and a lame replay of past encounters with alluring shiksas.)

As well as displaying an affectless disregard for his characters, Roth evinces something very like contempt for his readers. We learn from Amy that she

thinks Lonoff was killed by the subject matter of his novel (a subject that Zuckerman for some reason forgets to ask her about). She goes on to say:

"When Primo Levi killed himself everyone said it was because of his having been an inmate at Auschwitz. I thought it was because of his *writing* about Auschwitz, the labor of the last book, contemplating that horror with all that clarity. Getting up every morning to write that book would have killed anyone."

And Zuckerman notes for our benefit: "She was speaking of Levi's *The Drowned and the Saved*." Good to have that cleared up.

Zuckerman, as it happens, is suffering from a writer's disability of his own: He has done four drafts of a novel that he considers "at once unsatisfactory yet finished." He asks himself "what two American writers of the highest rank" might do in his position. Hemingway, he decides, would "put the manuscript aside, either to attempt to rewrite it later or to leave it unpublished for good," whereas Faulkner would "doggedly submit the completed manuscript for publication, permitting the book that he'd labored over unstintingly, and that he could take no further, to reach the public as it was and to yield whatever satisfactions it could." There seems to be more than a slight danger of hubris here, since Roth is inviting comparison with Hemingway and Faulkner while simultaneously allowing us to infer that he has decided to off-load a work that is something considerably less than first-rate. This half-guilty awareness is masked by a good deal of diatribe, against the collapse of literary standards in general and of the standard of cultural coverage in *The New York Times* in particular. In his curmudgeonhood, Zuckerman ends up quitting the city without even going back for his second-chance appointment with the urologist. *Exit Ghost* is billed as the last of the Zuckerman adventures, but it's as if Roth stops writing the book rather than finishes it.

There is a brief allusion to another ghost: the revenant figure in "Little

Gidding" who offers the poet "the gifts reserved for age." Zuckerman says that he's going to look these up, but he never does, and it isn't clear whether he forgets to or whether Roth has. That's perhaps a pity, because he might have taken a warning from the "gifts," which include

The conscious impotence of rage  
At human folly, and the laceration  
Of laughter at what ceases to amuse.  
And last, the rending pain of  
re-enactment

Recycling or reenactment is arguably a bad sign, especially when one is already putting the reader in mind of the subject matter of *The Dying Animal*. In that other very minor work, as perhaps you will recall, David Kepesh lost patience with the oral-sex ineptitude of one of his students, and

shoved a couple of pillows back of her head, propped up her head like that, angled it like that up against the headboard, and with my knees planted to either side of her and my ass centered over her, I leaned into her face and rhythmically, without letup, I fucked her mouth.

So there's no need to draw us a picture of that event. In *Exit Ghost*, or rather in *He and She*, in the middle of a wasteland of stilted conversation about Jamie's girlhood—most of it an aching repetition of what Billy has already "told" us—Jamie reveals that something not unlike the above, culminating in her vomiting, was once inflicted on her by the captain of the tennis team. Prompt upon his cue, Zuckerman seizes an opportunity to correct her on a point of grammar, and then adds: "In the old days, before well-brought-up adolescent girls had their faces fucked forcefully, you never heard 'hopefully' misused like that."

When Raymond Chandler felt things going limp in a story, he would have the door open and then it would be: Enter a man carrying a gun. When Roth is in the same fix, we know that some luckless goy chick is about to get it in the face. Exit reader. **A**

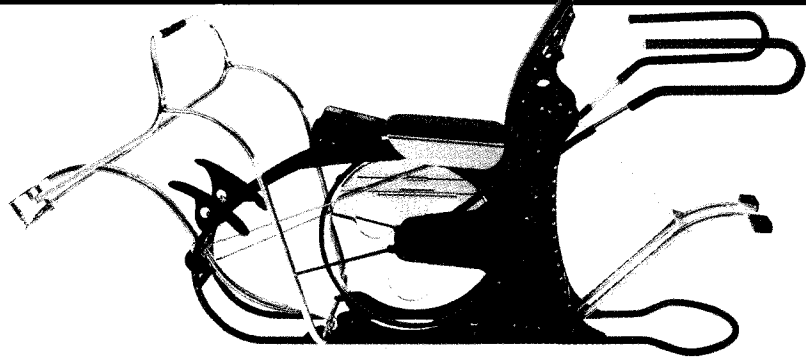
Christopher Hitchens is an *Atlantic* contributing editor and a *Vanity Fair* columnist.

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## BOOKS

A guide to additional releases

# COVER to COVER

### FICTION

#### **The Uncommon Reader**

by Alan Bennett (FSG)

This witty novella, in which Queen Elizabeth takes up reading in a big way (much to the consternation of her attendants) and discovers what all the fuss is about, is another bonbon from Bennett, the best-selling British novelist and Tony Award-winning playwright (*The History Boys*). He dispenses his observations on the purpose of reading—aside from pleasure, he contends, there isn't much reason for it, although it does develop empathy—with the light hand of a true authority. Delectable, yes, but also nutritionally sound.

#### **Tomorrow**

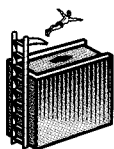
by Graham Swift (Knopf)

Along with Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, and A. N. Wilson, Swift was born around the midpoint of the last century and, like them, writes movingly about middle-aged parenthood. In this, his latest novel, the soft but urgent voice of a mother lying beside her sleeping husband rehearses the life-altering revelation they must make to their twins the next day. The tale she recounts isn't perhaps as surprising or as shattering as it might be, given the buildup, but Swift's capable narrative control and many sensitive touches make the book a satisfying read.

#### **Engleby**

by Sebastian Faulks (Doubleday)

One of the most consistently interesting and versatile of today's British novelists, Faulks is particularly adept at period atmosphere. Whether it's the First World War in *Birdsong* or the Second in *Charlotte Gray*, the author gets the details and—more important—the zeitgeist right. Here he tackles the 1970s in all their squalor, complete with varieties of drugs and sexual experience. Faulks shows restraint and skill in telling the



story of his eponymous hero, a scholarship student at an English boarding school and at Cambridge who later winds up at an altogether different type of institution. Getting into the mind of a psychopath and rendering it on paper aren't easy, but Faulks has performed this twin feat admirably.

### SOCIETY and CULTURE



#### **Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century**

by Cheryl Lynn Greenberg (Princeton)

The vexed topic of black-Jewish relations in 20th-century America requires a brave writer, and Greenberg confronts the issue with honesty and dedication. While she provides ample evidence that the golden age of cooperation between the two groups wasn't as harmonious as generally believed, she also provides numerous examples of cohesion during the more fraught times. Greenberg is not only adept at uncovering little-known controversies and victories; her brief exposition of the famous New York City teachers' strike in the late 1960s, an incident widely credited with bringing to a boil simmering black-Jewish tensions, is a masterpiece of compression and insight.

#### **Uncommon Arrangements: Seven Portraits of Married Life in London Literary Circles 1910–1939**

by Katie Roiphe (Dial Press)

At first glance, this might seem like a chance to trip lightly through territory too well trod to justify yet another retrospective. Does anything about, say, that romantic entanglement at Charleston between Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, and David Garnett merit more explication? But Roiphe is original and offbeat. She adroitly exposes the human cost of these brave new experiments, both to the participants and to the innocent victims caught up in their dramas.

#### **Motherland: A Philosophical History of Russia**

by Lesley Chamberlain (Overlook/Rookery)

A lifelong student of all things Russian, the British-born Chamberlain reported for Reuters in Moscow; but even after Soviet Russia appeared to have eclipsed Mother Russia, the author continued her search for the country's national essence. Her earlier books, whether on Russian food or weightier aspects of culture, revealed an uncommonly attractive writer—and she remains so even when taking on the daunting task of summing up a nation's philosophy. Individualism, she argues, which was burgeoning in the early 20th century before being swept aside in 1917 by the Communist Revolution, is key to a unique Russian philosophical tradition. Chamberlain follows her avatar, the philosopher-sage Isaiah Berlin, who serves as Homer to her Virgil in this heroic task.

### BIOGRAPHY and MEMOIR



#### **The Blair Years:**

##### **The Alastair Campbell Diaries**

by Alastair Campbell (Knopf)

"No man is a hero to his valet" may need updating to "No politician is a statesman to his spin doctor." True, Campbell's up-close-and-personal look at Tony Blair includes a comment on the former PM's underwear, but these are fascinating diaries. Keen observers of Bill Clinton will not wonder that in unburdening himself about Monica Lewinsky, the then-president focused on his own feelings and sense of victimhood. George W. Bush emerges as a far more thoughtful figure than his critics would have him, and given the amount of time the author has spent talking to Bush and observing his interactions with others, Campbell's is an assessment readers should heed. The author claims to have been careful about including details that would undermine

current Prime Minister Gordon Brown; but given what remains, it's hard to imagine what's been cut. Still, Brown does shine here as unquestionably the most authoritative and consequential finance czar in modern British history. The author serves up all manner of insider-ish revelations and acute portraits, of everyone from Boris Yeltsin and Nelson Mandela to Queen Elizabeth II and the Princess of Wales. Unique access and sharp observation make this easily one of the most important political memoirs of recent years.

**To the Last Salute: Memories of an Austrian U-Boat Commander**

by Georg von Trapp (*Nebraska*)  
Long before Georg von Trapp married the former postulant Maria and they became world-famous (through Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical play and then movie of their life), he had a distinguished military career as an Austro-Hungarian submarine commander in World War I (how many remember that the Dual Monarchy was a major naval power?), which he chronicles in his lively, amusing, at-times-gripping memoir of naval warfare in the Mediterranean, and U-boat life. This book, first published in Austria in 1935, has finally found an English translator: von Trapp's granddaughter. One of its fascinating aspects is the glimpse it offers into the multiethnic makeup of this imperial navy, and the admirable attitudes and behavior of a patriotic officer on the losing side of a great conflict.

**Shakespeare & Co.: Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, John Fletcher and the Other Players in His Story**

by Stanley Wells (*Pantheon*)  
Shakespeare was, in Ben Jonson's view, "not of an age, but for all time." Wells, for many years the director of the Shakespeare Institute at the University of Birmingham, has built a distinguished career on the durability and transcendence of Shakespeare's poems and plays, but in this book he asks us to consider Shakespeare in terms of the age in which the bard lived. He sets about with elegance and ease to chronicle Shakespeare's relationships with his fellow workers, that remarkable collection of actors and playwrights without whom

there would not have been a golden age of English drama—or, Wells vigorously argues, Shakespeare as we know him.

**Tearing Down the Wall of Sound: The Rise and Fall of Phil Spector**

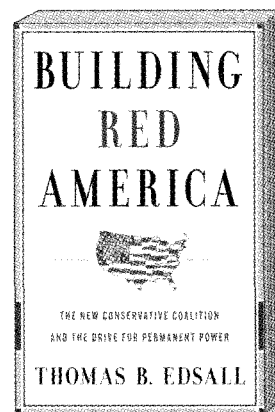
by Mick Brown (*Knopf*)  
That a fresh biography of Spector—the unhinged music producer par excellence whose fame and misfortune are legendary (and cautionary)—was overdue is unquestionable. That a sordid Hollywood murder trial seemed to occasion it is unfortunate. (A British journalist, Brown conducted a revelatory December 2002 interview in the lavish manse of the "First Tycoon of Teen" a mere five weeks before the B-movie queen Lana Clarkson turned up dead there—an interview that provided the initial impetus for this volume.) In any event, the author does an admirable job of tracing his subject's sometimes-reclusive, sometimes-aggressive, always-eccentric life, from youthful tragedy to trailblazing success to flamboyant decline. Though his book stints a bit on its titular promise (a more thorough analysis of Spector's "Wagnerian approach to rock and roll" would have been welcome), and though it may ultimately serve as mere backstory (the denouement of the current drama seems a ways off), it nevertheless provides an absorbing portrait that is by turns harrowing, farcical, and edifying.

**Peeling the Onion**

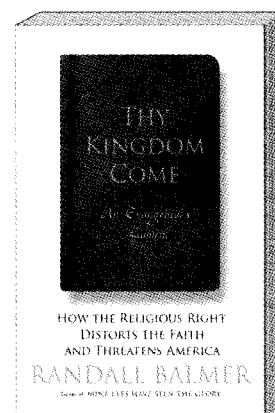
by Günter Grass (*Harcourt*)  
This book comes trailing clouds of controversy because of its revelation that Grass—the conscience (or scold) of his generation about its Nazi past—was himself a member of the Waffen SS at the end of World War II. Readers will have to judge for themselves whether his mea culpa is convincing or merely the ploy of a powerful literary manipulator. But Grass is devastatingly severe in his treatment of his youthful self. Perhaps the most shocking aspect of this book is its portrait of the young soldier-artist as dedicated Nazi: Grass and other Germans really did believe that a hostile world was threatening them even as their nation was waging aggressive war. And when his Allied captors showed the young POW irrefutable evidence of the death camps, he refused to believe. The dialectic between his current and former selves gives this book its special resonance.

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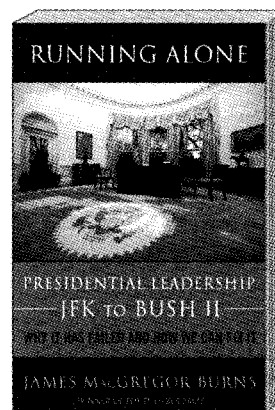
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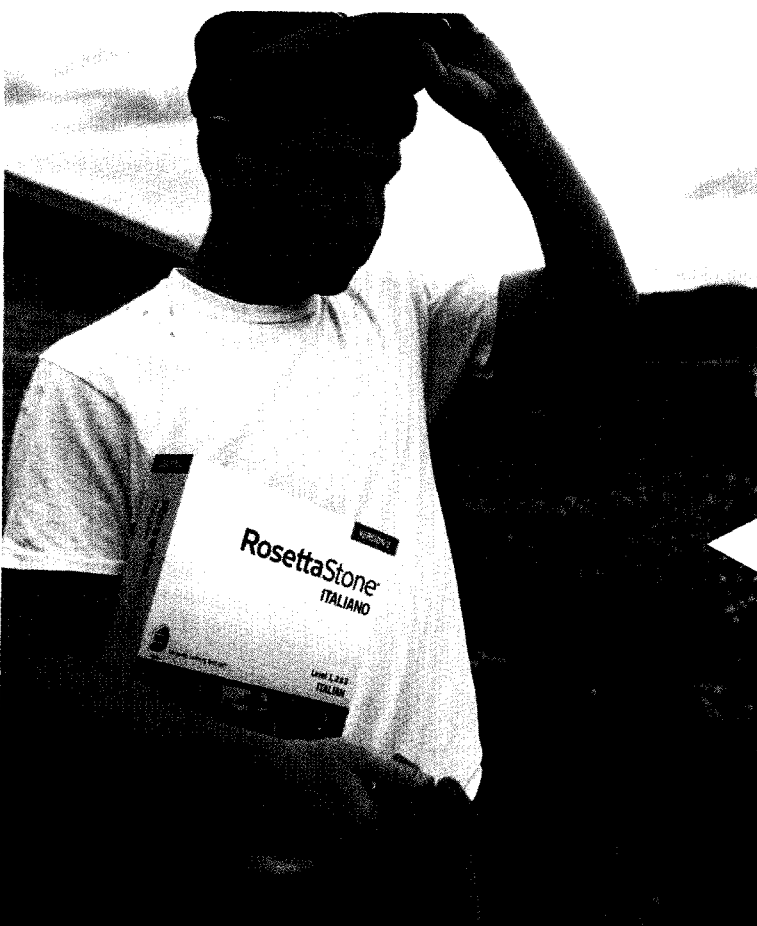
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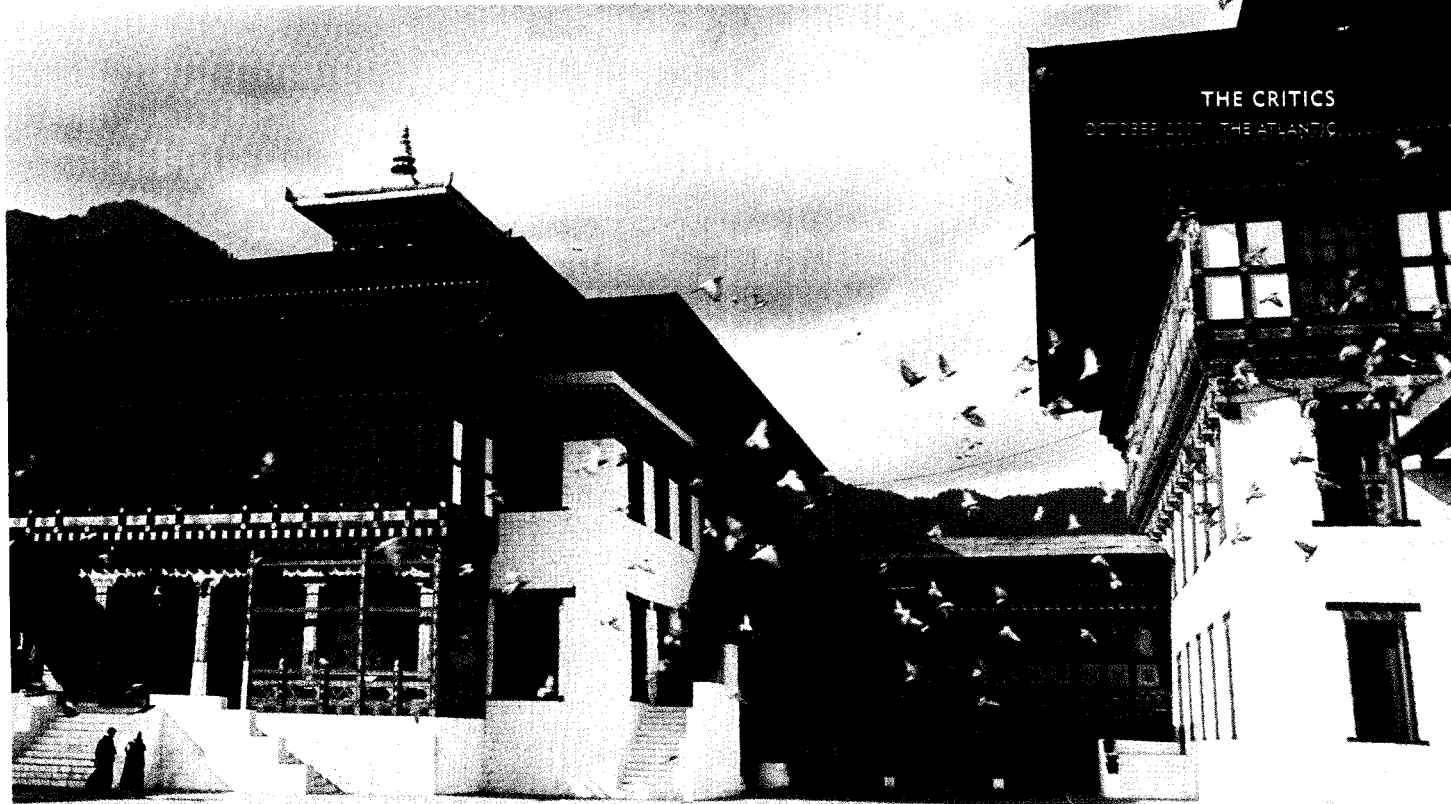
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## TRAVELS

Bhutan may be modernizing rapidly, but it's still one of the most unspoiled places on Earth.

# Hidden Kingdom

BY MARK JENKINS

The Chimi Lhakhang monastery sits atop a knoll in the Punakha Chhu valley in western Bhutan, surrounded by terraced rice fields and clusters of chalet-like homes. The day I arrived, villagers were scything the rice, working slowly across fields of gold. The men wore the *gho*, a knee-length patterned robe with long sleeves and white cuffs; the women the *kira*—an ankle-length wraparound dress—and a bright pink or blue vest. Beneath the broad eaves of one home, a boy gave his little brother a bath in a washbasin. A man and a woman trod along a path beneath gargantuan loads of hay. A youth with a bamboo bow and arrow shot at a target impossibly far away. Outside the monastery's temple, acolytes with shaved heads studied their texts in the grass. A group of boys seated beneath a tree blew ineffectually on long copper horns. I felt as if I'd fallen through a crack in time.

A lithe adolescent monk unlocked the temple door and escorted me inside. It was chilly and dark, the floorboards worn smooth by centuries of bare feet. Beneath a gilded statue of Buddha lay an iron bow and arrow and a huge wooden phallus. The monk snatched up the phallus, clunked me on the head, and mumbled a blessing. He then stepped into the shadows and left.

The phallus is Bhutan's most celebrated symbol. Homes are painted with images of 10-foot-tall penises spurting semen, monastery entrances are adorned with carved wooden erections, giant concrete fountains have phallic shapes. According to Buddhist scholars, the phallus is a cautionary symbol of the dangers of the male ego; for ordinary Bhutanese, it's a talisman against evil spirits.

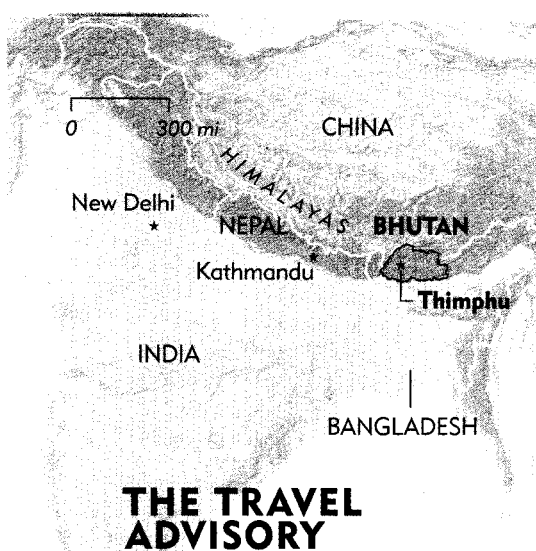
The symbol can be traced back to the Buddhist saint Drukpa Kunley, the "divine madman," who came to Bhutan

in the late 15th century. He is a contradictory hero—a holy man, degenerate womanizer, and blasphemous drunk whose behavior was intended to shock both clergy and laymen out of lazy reliance on ancient ritual. Legend has it that he shot an arrow into the sky from Tibet, followed its path into Bhutan, and began seducing his way across the country, subduing maidens and demonesses alike.

As I stood in the temple pondering this history, I studied the Buddha's serene features—the half-closed eyelids, long earlobes, straight back. Butter candles flickered hypnotically. I felt my heartbeat slowing, my body relaxing ...

Out of nowhere, a cell phone went off, emitting pounding rap music. I heard shuffling, then caught sight of the young

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For an author-narrated slideshow of Bhutan, visit [www.theatlantic.com/bhutan](http://www.theatlantic.com/bhutan).



### Getting there

Bhutan is still remarkably off the beaten path, with just over 17,000 visitors last year. Tourists must use a licensed guide service (more than 100 are registered). The cultural knowledge and communicativeness of the guides vary widely from service to service, so contact previous clients about their experience before booking your trip. I used **Lhomen Tours & Trekking** ([www.lhomen.com.bt](http://www.lhomen.com.bt)). Your guide service will also arrange your plane tickets and visa.

Travel rates are set by the government, at a minimum of \$200 a day (\$65 of which goes directly to national health care and education). The fee includes essentially everything in-country: transportation, hotel, meals, guides, and so on.

### When to go

The best months to visit are October/November and March/April. Expect heavy rain in the lowlands and heavy snow in the mountains during the monsoon season, which lasts from mid-May to early September.

### Trekking

About 15 percent of those who visit Bhutan sign up for treks, lasting from two to 25 days. If you're more interested in mountains than monasteries, this is the way to go. Pack animals carry all camping gear, so you're free to hike with just a daypack.

### Recommended Reading

*Beyond the Sky and the Earth*, by Jamie Zeppa, and *So Close to Heaven*, by Barbara Crossette, are good, idiosyncratic nonfiction introductions to the country and its people. The best guidebook I have found is Lonely Planet's *Bhutan*.

monk slipping through the shadows, fumbling in his robes to switch off the slam-beat song. He grinned sheepishly and guided me out through the hobbit-size door into modern Bhutan.

The Kingdom of Bhutan is in the midst of an astonishing cultural transformation. TV and the Internet were allowed into the kingdom in 1999, and the country has changed more in the past eight years than it did in the previous 800. Sandwiched between the frozen Tibetan plateau to the north and the sweltering Indian valley of Assam to the south, Bhutan is slightly larger than Switzerland, but with a population of just under 700,000 and much bigger mountains (its tallest peak, Gangkhar Puensum, at 24,741 feet, is the highest unclimbed summit in the world). The country is all mountains and steep forests; about 20 percent of it lies perpetually under snow, and just over 7 percent of the land is arable. It has one airport, one highway—a switchback slip of pavement barely wider in places than a bicycle path—and not a single traffic light.

The kingdom's remoteness allowed it to remain isolated for centuries. Snow-clogged passes kept out foreign marauders; the only invader was Buddhism, imported by Guru Rinpoche, the founder of the earliest school of Tibetan Buddhism, in 746. Before Rinpoche's arrival, the Bhutanese practiced a nature-worshipping form of animism called Bon. The absorption of Bon's earthly gods and goblins into the new religion created a uniquely environmental form of Buddhism that has defined the culture to this day.

At the center of the country's religion are its *dzongs*, monastic fortresses that dominate the landscape of every valley. Until 50 years ago, the *dzongs* controlled all public life: Commercial decisions were

made there, disputes were settled, boys became monks. With its massive walls and secret inner courtyards, the *dzong* is an apt metaphor for what Bhutan until recently was: a world unto itself. Other than a couple of Portuguese missionaries and several small British expeditions in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, no foreigners had been inside the kingdom. The country essentially had no military and no foreign policy; India was its only connection to the outside world.

In 1959, when China crushed Tibet and was poised to invade Bhutan as well, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck realized

that his country could no longer survive in isolation. With financial assistance from India (which views Bhutan as an essential buffer between itself and China), he created an army, a legal system, and a modern postal service. In 1972, his 17-year-old son, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, ascended the throne. He had had both a pragmatic Western education and rigorous spiritual training, and over the next generation brought his nation into the 20th century—opening it to tourism, establishing the Royal Bhutan Polytechnic, developing hydroelectric plants, and joining such organizations as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

During his first years in power, the king introduced the concept of Gross National Happiness, declaring that emotional well-being was as important as economic advancement. GNH focuses on such things as health care, education, and the environment, and in these areas the government has made extraordinary gains. For example, in the 1950s, life expectancy was 36 years, and, I've been told, there were only four doctors in the entire country; by 2000, life expectancy was 66, and by 2005 Bhutan had 29 district hospitals and 176 basic-health-care clinics.



**BHUTAN'S MOST** celebrated symbol is everywhere.

Environmentalists regard Wangchuck as the most progressive leader in the world. His government has banned mountaineering and clear-cut logging, and it strictly regulates mining and even flower picking (picking without a permit is punishable by a fine and sometimes imprisonment). Unlike almost every other place on the planet, Bhutan has increased its forest cover in the past 10 years, to about 70 percent of its landmass.

The policy of promoting GNH rather than GDP may well be easing Bhutan's passage into modernity: In the country's first census, conducted in 2005, fully 96 percent of Bhutanese reported being "happy" or "very happy."

After making more than half a dozen journeys across Tibet and witnessing the dismantling of its culture, I went to Bhutan in hopes of finding a country that had retained its identity. I've been there twice, most recently last October, and can say that Bhutan is as close as you'll come to what Tibet was before the Communists, or Nepal before the capitalists.

Nonetheless, tourism is controlled by the state, and independent travel is prohibited; visitors must use an official travel agency, which provides a guide who sticks to you like honey. With few exceptions, tourists eat in tourist-only restaurants, sleep in tourist-only hotels, and get few opportunities to speak with ordinary citizens.

Sonam, the 23-year-old guide assigned to me on my latest trip, began as expected: shuttling me from one *dzong* to another, all the while keeping up a stream of chatter about a bewildering multitude of Buddhist saints and Bon deities. One afternoon, I asked him to write down the names and patron saints of the *dzongs* we had visited, while I took a much-needed unaccompanied walk. When I returned, I found him cribbing from a Lonely Planet guidebook he had hidden in his knapsack.

Bhutanese view it as an honor for one family member to join a monastery. I asked Sonam if he'd ever considered becoming a monk. He gave me an "Are you an idiot?" look. "No sex," he said, and



grinned. From then on, *dzongs* were out, and pop culture was in.

Sonam invited me to his home, a four-room apartment in Thimphu, the capital, which he shares with 13 members of his extended family. In one bedroom was an elaborate Buddhist shrine. The living room contained a boom box and a large television; Sonam and his family spend Sundays watching HBO.

That evening, I asked Sonam what young people in Thimphu did on a Wednesday night.

"Party," he said, snapping out of his somnambulant guidespeak. "You want to go?"

He took me to an underground nightclub. It had warm, expensive beer, a murky atmosphere, squealing electric guitars, an off-tune keyboardist—all the requisite rebel vibes. At the end of the evening, walking past the packs of dogs that take over Thimphu's streets at night (as Buddhists, the Bhutanese can't bring themselves to euthanize the miserable, diseased mongrels: One of them could be your great-grandmother), I asked Sonam if any young people still listened to traditional music.

"Only the village kids," he said disdainfully.

So what kind of music did he like?

"Nirvana is my favorite band. Nirvana and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I love them."

On my last day in Bhutan, Sonam took me to an archery competition at Changlimithang Stadium, in the middle of Thimphu. At either end of the field was a target; as we approached, teams of archers were preparing to fire. They'd already said ritual prayers and consulted with a *tsips*, a shaman believed to have the ability to guide arrows. Wise preparation, perhaps: The targets, less than a foot in diameter, were 130 yards apart.

Archery is the national sport of Bhutan, but even here Western influences were apparent. The bows were not made of bamboo, like those used to defend against Tibetans centuries ago; every competitor had a fiberglass-and-pulleys, made-in-the-USA bow. The contestants wore *ghos*, but with argyle socks and Western sneakers.

The first archer stepped up to the plate. After nocking his arrow, he leaned back and aimed at the sky, as if to shoot the sun; then he drew the bowstring with a kid-gloved hand. Traffic blared and construction cranes screeched in the distance, but he remained intently focused, apparently oblivious to the noise.

The arrow was too swift for the eye to follow. All heads snapped toward the target just in time to witness the hit. A solid *thunk* reverberated over the field, raising a cry of joy from the archer. ▀

Mark Jenkins is the global correspondent for Rodale Press.



## TECHNOLOGY

Protecting files and programs need not make you crazy—or even cost you a cent.

# Simple Security

BY JAMES FALLOWS

Try not to be depressed by the following thought: Protecting a computer against viruses and similar problems is like protecting a country against bombings and similar terrorist threats. Worry too little about the danger, and you end up exposed to risks you might easily have avoided. Worry too much, and you end up sacrificing the very things—flexibility, freedom, simple peace of mind—you were trying to protect.

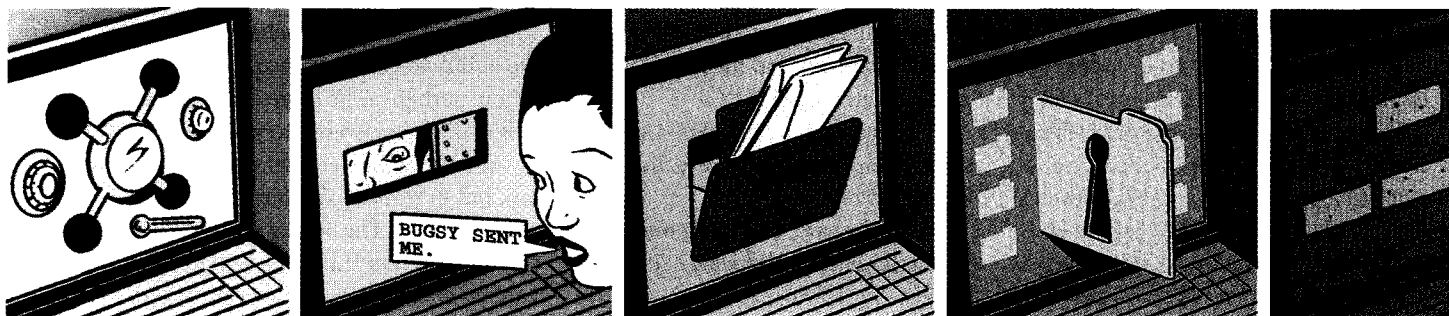
Here is the thought that helps me avoid being depressed: In our individual computing lives, we have tools that

rise in popularity makes it more attractive to virus writers and partly because of technical changes (not worth detailing here) that increase a Mac's vulnerability to infected documents—and even programs—originally created on a PC.

I take computer security seriously, because twice in nearly 30 years of computing I've had big problems caused by infected files. About 10 years ago, someone e-mailed me a Word document containing a virus that the antivirus program I used did not detect. (People use these terms in various ways, but I am

old virus lurked in Word's "macro" function, a barn door Microsoft has long since closed.) Files I e-mailed to others spread the virus to their machines, unless they had better antivirus software than I did. I never really solved this problem until I started over with a new computer, transferring files only after running them through a high-power debugging program.

The second incident occurred a few years later, when a malware program made its way onto one of my family's computers and corrupted many pro-



allow us to set the balance of worry in a way that suits our own risk tolerance and taste. Not all users know about these tools, so here is an overview of some of them, plus guidelines about which threats are serious enough to worry about.

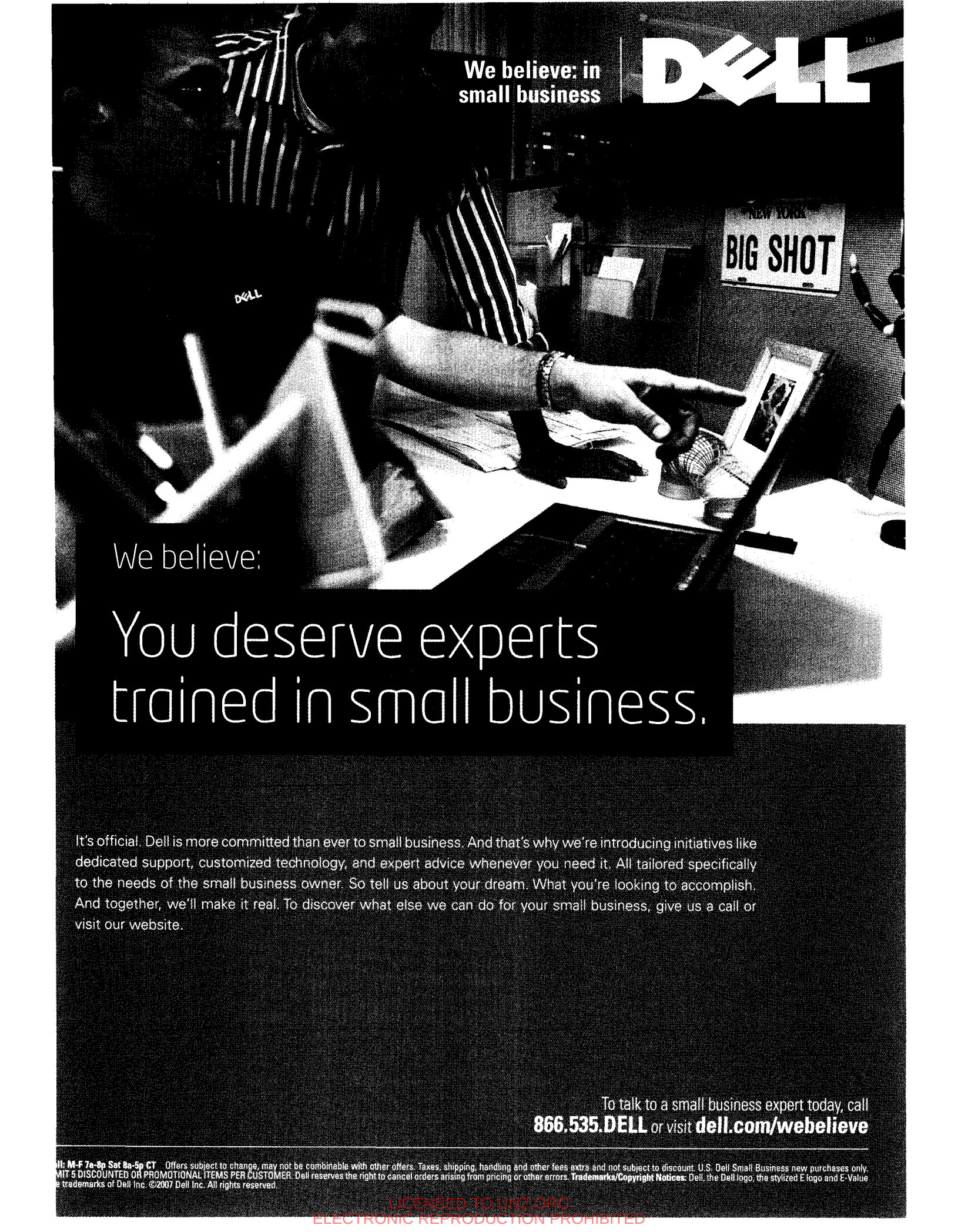
I am talking here about purely personal computers, not those that are part of a big corporate network, where the emphasis will always be on security. And I am talking about PC-style and Macintosh alike. For years, Mac users have felt either sympathetic or (more often) smug about the virus and "malware" concerns that plagued the Windows community, imagining they would remain immune. The reality is that the era of serene isolation is ending, partly because the Mac's

using *virus* to mean malicious code that infects a file and then replicates itself to other files opened or created on the same machine. In theory a virus might be benign, doing no more than propagating itself to other files. But it's never good when a file is changed without the owner's knowledge or control. I am using *malware* to refer to code designed explicitly to cause actual damage, like deleting or corrupting files, or turning your machine into a "zombie" that can be remotely controlled to send out spam or do other bad things.)

I had no warning that anything was wrong, but for days every new file I created in Word—and every old file I opened—acquired the virus too. (That

program files so they wouldn't run. Eventually I had to reformat the hard disk, after backing up the data files, and reinstall the programs from their original disks. What a nightmare!

But I have also encountered security systems so intrusive that I simply stopped using them. The latest example is the "User Account Control" feature built into Windows Vista. It is meant to compartmentalize the computer's functions, so that an intruder who gets control of part of the machine can't take over the whole thing. But this also means that a normal, legit user has to go through security hoops many times a day, sometimes even for routine operations like copying a file. I finally disabled



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the function, despite numerous “May-day”-style warnings from Vista, and I see from tech blogs that many other people are doing the same.

Any security policy requires consideration of priority and proportion. Priority: working first on the biggest threats and learning to live with some smaller ones. Proportion: taking some safety measures but knowing when to stop. Think if the Transportation Security Administration grasped these concepts! In the meantime, here is what they mean for computers.

**Passwords.** By far my biggest worry in my computing life is the loss or theft of financial information. My transactions in China, where I am now living, are nearly all in cash, but virtually every other part of my economic life is online. A decade ago, few people would have predicted that Americans would willingly entrust so much of their wealth, welfare, and credit-card information to online sources. Financial institutions keep coming up with new security tricks, as they should. But the main tool on the individual’s side is the proper use of passwords.

I use the same password for all my financial accounts, because otherwise I would go nuts. But the password is “strong”—at least eight or 10 characters, with upper- and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. It follows the rule that it is easy for me to remember but very hard for anyone else to guess. Many people neglect to create strong passwords because they think it’s complicated. But it doesn’t have to be. Take a name and a number that mean something to you and alter them in some systematic, minor way—turn the E’s into 3’s, say, or insert a character like & in the middle or at the end of the word.

In theory, you should change these periodically. I bother doing that only with financial accounts. Also, I say “No” when my browser asks if I would like it to remember the password for a financial site. (For convenience, I let the browser remember other passwords I create for, say, joining a Yahoo discussion group or reading the *China Daily*. I don’t even bother to change my e-mail passwords frequently, because the security

problems with e-mail can be addressed more easily.) I try never to use a financial site when I am piggybacking on someone else’s unsecured WiFi network. Maybe there’s no risk, but I get suspicious when I see a network named something like “Free Public Wi-Fi Access!” at an airport or a coffee shop. For-pay WiFi networks, like T-Mobile in Starbucks, are presumably much safer—after all, you have to give your credit-card number to get on in the first place.

I pay attention to one other kind of password: I make sure that the WiFi networks I set up at home require a password to log in. It takes only a minute, and it allows different computers in my house to share information on the network without my needing to wonder whether someone else is sharing the data too.

**E-mail.** Here are the two things wrong with e-mail: what it brings in, and what it lets out. On the inbound side, people worry too much about what is an annoyance but not a real threat: spam. Sure, I too am tired of hearing about “Discount C1alis!!” and the latest offer from Nigeria. And yes, I realize that for network operators the enormous volumes of spam create serious logistical problems. But nearly every e-mail system has a serviceable filter that can learn to cull 95 percent or more of the incoming flow. If you can’t tell at a glance which of the remaining items are spam, you’re not trying. (The best filtering system I have encountered is Gmail’s. It has relatively few “false negatives,” spam messages that make their way into your inbox, and amazingly few “false positives,” messages you want that are trapped by the Gmail filter. The updated junk-mail filter in Outlook 2007 is hyperaggressive in trapping messages as potential spam, but it learns quickly when you indicate which ones you’d like to see.)

By the way, you are an enemy of society if you have signed up for a “challenge-response” antispam filter. When a message from an unrecognized e-mail address comes into one of these systems, the filter sends back an (inevitably insulting) inquiry to the effect of: Who the hell are you? Fill out a form, and I’ll see if

I want to accept your e-mail! Mainly I encounter these when people have written me out of the blue and I reply from a different e-mail address than the one they were expecting. EarthLink is a wonderful company, but I would like it a lot better if it stopped featuring challenge-response for its customers’ e-mail.

The real incoming threat via e-mail is, of course, a virus or other potentially damaging piece of code. Users really should worry about this and apply protective tools. The market is full of anti-virus programs, which can be measured by three standards: completeness, frequency of update, and speed of operation. These mean, respectively, how many viruses and other threats, including malware, the program will recognize; how frequently it adds to its list of threats; and how long it takes to do its job. Speed is a bigger issue than you might think. Since the programs scan each e-mail, each document, and in some cases each program file before you open it, slower ones can make your computer seem as if its internal processing speed has been cut in half.

Most new PCs come with one of two antivirus systems installed, on a free-trial basis: McAfee or Norton (part of Symantec). The demo version will usually run for two or three months, after which you must subscribe to get further protection. Prices range from about \$25 a year to nearly \$100, depending on which extra features you want. I’ve paid for and relied on both. At the moment, Norton has a slight edge, mainly because it doesn’t slow the computer as much as McAfee (Norton must have fixed something; earlier versions were molasses-slow). Both are effective and reliable—as are other for-pay products, like ZoneAlarm.

But what I now use and like is a fast, free, frequently updated antivirus program called Avast, from the Alwil company, based in Prague. Like the other programs mentioned here, it comes with a variety of other anti-malware features. Alwil says that 30 million people worldwide now use the free, home version of its program. (Businesses are supposed to pay.) The Grisoft company, also



founded in the Czech Republic, offers another popular, free antivirus program called AVG.

Neither AVG nor Avast is yet available for the Mac. (Until recently, there was no reason. Norton and McAfee have well-established Mac programs; I haven't used either enough to recommend one over the other.) I chose Avast for my PC because its range of features seemed broader. Before installing either, you have to uninstall the trial version of McAfee or Norton that is probably embedded somewhere on your machine.

And what about the outbound threat from e-mail? This is the risk that something you write will be seen by people you didn't intend. This threat is different from the others, in that it's entirely within each person's control. But it's worth remembering that within 20 years, e-mail has gone from seeming about the most-secure form of communication to about the least. Now that everyone has e-mail, it's simply too easy for messages to be bcc'd or forwarded in mischievous ways. If you have thoughts you don't want others to see, don't put them in e-mail. When answering e-mail, I delete either all of the incoming thread or all of it except the latest message I'm directly answering. Much e-mail-induced embarrassment comes from those long attached threads.

**Firewalls.** Firewall utilities keep other users from gaining partial or total control of your own machine via its network connections. Without a good firewall, your files might be corrupted, as mine were several years ago. Or "spyware" might be installed, which can monitor your activity and potentially capture passwords or other sensitive data. Fortunately, excellent firewalls are now built into both Mac and PC operating systems. The Mac's is built into OSX; Microsoft's Windows Firewall is built into Vista and Service Pack 2 for Windows XP (available at <http://tinyurl.com/3upjr>).

With these measures in place, I can apply my worries to more-productive matters than the possibility of attack. That's the goal of any security policy—including national security, too. ■

James Fallows is an Atlantic national correspondent.

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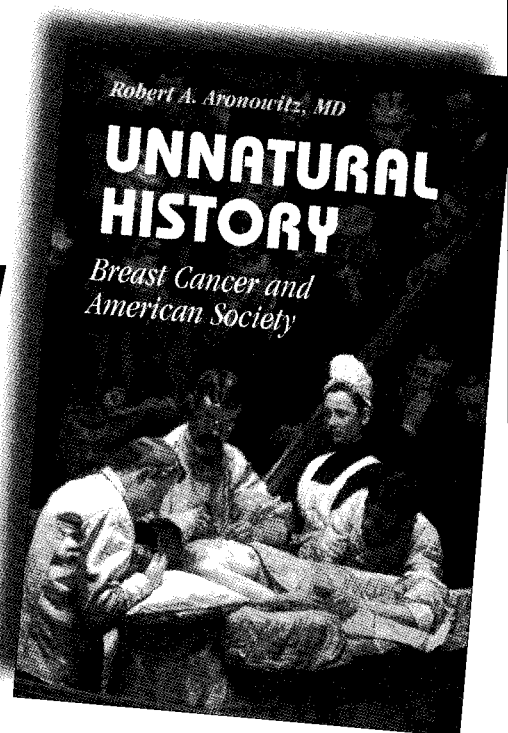
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## CONTENT

By bringing order to the Web, Facebook could become as important to us as Google.

# About Facebook

BY MICHAEL HIRSCHORN

Facebook's announcement in May that it was opening its Web-development tools to outsiders has been the biggest news in the Web world since the arrival of YouTube, in 2005. The announcement came amid a massive increase in the number of Facebook's visitors—it doubled to 26 million between September 2006 and May 2007—and a growing sense that MySpace's reign as the unchallenged kingpin of social media was coming to a close.

I still believe that a lot of the "Web 2.0" hype is just that—hype—and that many of the putatively revolutionary

advances in sites like MySpace, not to mention the scores of copycat sites still springing up around the Web, will quickly become commoditized (see "The Web 2.0 Bubble," April *Atlantic*). They rely too much on the packaging and marketing of tools that exist elsewhere on the Web, and they lack a compelling retention mechanism, which leaves them open to the quickly changing loyalties of their (mostly young) users. This is what happened to Friendster, which lost most of its mojo almost overnight after MySpace—shinier, sexier, scarier to grown-ups—hove into view.

I stand by this general principle, but at the moment I'm completely entranced by the new, turbo-charged Facebook. It's the best mousetrap I've seen since I first laid eyes on eBay. No wonder that, in a moment of perhaps accidental honesty, Rupert Murdoch, CEO of News Corporation, the owner of MySpace, said when asked about the flood of people signing up for MySpace, "I wish they were. They're all going to Facebook."

Facebook was started by Mark Zuckerberg, 23, while he was a student at Harvard in 2004. The general concept was to digitize the legendary freshman-

JON KRAISE



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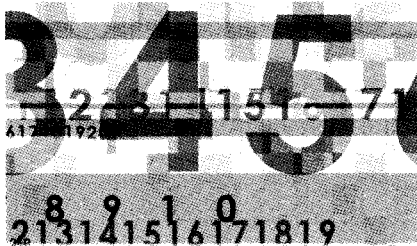
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Arthur T. Benjamin is Professor of Mathematics at Harvey Mudd College, where he has taught since 1989. He earned a Ph.D. in Mathematical Sciences from Johns Hopkins University. The Mathematical Association of America honored him with national awards for distinguished teaching in 1999 and 2000 and named him the George Pólya Lecturer for 2006–08.

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year “facebook,” and allow students not only to gawk at one another's photos but also to flirt, network, interact. The site's instant popularity prompted Zuckerberg, showing a restraint beyond his years, to roll out the site to other colleges rather than opening it up to everyone—first elite schools, then more broadly. The mode of expansion was itself ingenious because it forswore willy-nilly growth in favor of building meaningful communities whose interlocking loyalties tied them more closely to Facebook. Eventually, the site moved beyond college to high-school networks, then company networks, then everyone. At the same time, it began adding features, most notably one last year that allows you to track what your friends are doing on Facebook.

At the moment, Facebook is the site that, in my experience, comes closest to fulfilling the promise of social media. In so doing, it raises some bigger questions about how we're going to be using the Web in the future and whether some of the received wisdom about the Internet—that we're headed inexorably toward a digital universe of chaotic, endlessly shifting interactivity—is true.

The catchall term *social media* encompasses Web applications that allow individuals to create their own pages—filled with postings, photos, video, and portable applications generally called “widgets”—and interact with other users. The theory is that these networks will create a virtual environment in which like-minded people can find one another. In practice, as with Goldilocks and the porridge, the gruel tends to be too hot or too cold. On MySpace, the flood of pseudo-buddies and marketing come-ons disguised as offers of friendship quickly becomes suffocating. Too hot. On a business-networking site like LinkedIn, the very nature of the concept becomes self-defeating: The subset of people you want to schmooze with and who want to schmooze with you is simply too small, and too difficult to separate from the much larger group of people you are trying to avoid or who are trying to avoid you. Too cold.

Facebook is getting the temperature just right, and in the process has been able to give social media real social capital. Gathering friends on MySpace requires nothing more than banging through a lot of profiles and “friending” everyone you find. I know relatively few of my MySpace friends. I know most of my Facebook friends; I even like some of them. This is because Facebook prompts users to explain how they know one another. It's no idle feature, since, as you quickly discover, allowing users into your circle allows them to track your moves on Facebook and vice versa. Even more compellingly, it allows you to track, if you wish, their interactions with other users, all from your own user page. You can play with your privacy settings to prevent this, but as you become acculturated to the site, you realize that you have to give information to get information.

Meanwhile, unlike almost any other service on the Web, Facebook lets you decide to restrict this activity to your friend group and/or hide it from Google's prying eyes. The experience is initially unnerving, but once you get the hang of it, you start feeling like you're part of some great undulating, pulsing virtual experiment—like that scene in Wim Wenders's *Wings of Desire* when Cassiel and Daniel wander Berlin hearing the innermost thoughts of everyone around them, except funnier and less pretentious. There's even a cool little app called Friend Wheel that charts the connections among your friends and presents it as a nice spin-art-type graphic.

Moreover, Facebook's stricter registration process has, to date, largely spared it from the spam and other commercial elements that are making MySpace so unsatisfying. You can, of course, simply refuse to “friend” a direct-marketing come-on on MySpace, but when you start getting five, six, or a dozen of them a day, you dread logging on. Facebook's solution to this problem is cunning: As in real life, the Facebook interface makes it hard to access new people unless you have friends in common or are part of a preexisting network, often policed through e-mail addresses (for example,

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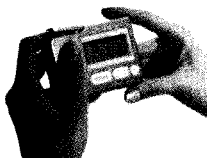
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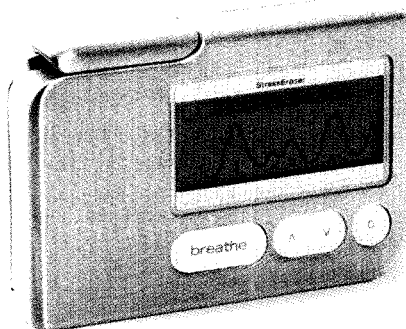
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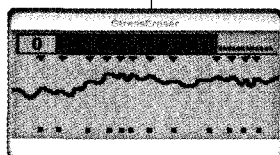
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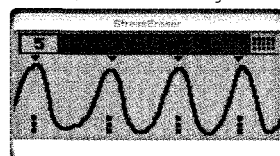
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Facebook's announcement that it would be opening itself to outside applications, which are more-sophisticated versions of those aforementioned widgets, was the perfect example of how the company has balanced the yin and yang of openness and control. It strikes a blow for Webby openness, allowing these outside applications to integrate fully into its internal operations and creating a seamless experience for the user. And Facebook has promised that it will share revenues generated by these applications, something MySpace, with its more rigid platform, has so far not matched. But Facebook has opened up to the world on its own terms. It effectively rezones the fun out of YouTube videos by allowing them to be posted only in discreet little boxes. (This may be no accident, since there is something almost Richard Meieresque about Facebook: The garishness of most YouTube videos might despoil the high-modernist aesthetic of the Facebook user interface.)

The result of the decision to open Facebook was a frenzy of interactivity and creativity, and thousands of specially created apps were available by midsummer. Most of these apps are small pleasures—virtual food fights, cheesy digital “gifts” you can “buy” for your friends, maps you can customize to show where you've lived and traveled. But given the maelstrom of wildcat entrepreneurship that Facebook's announcement unleashed, it's pretty clear that these simple games will be replaced by tools of ever-greater sophistication. In just one telling case, the popular music-sharing social network iLike has created an app that lives inside Facebook. Increasingly, Facebook users will be able to collect and perform functions from their home pages that you once could find only by visiting dozens of Web sites. It's become a mini-Web for people who don't like clutter.

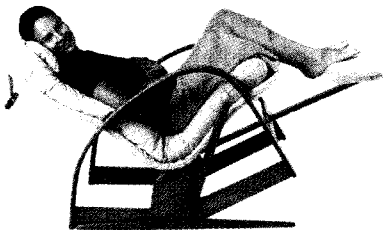
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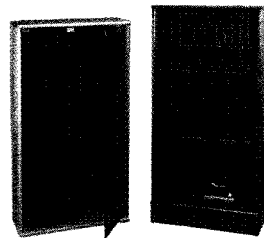
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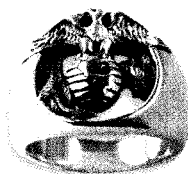
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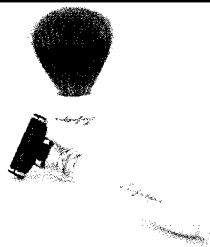
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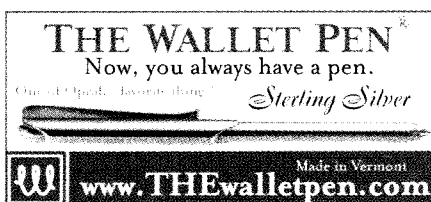
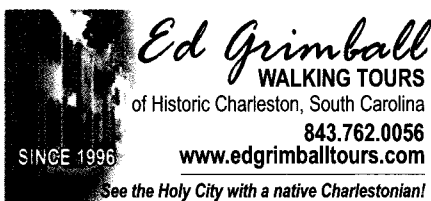
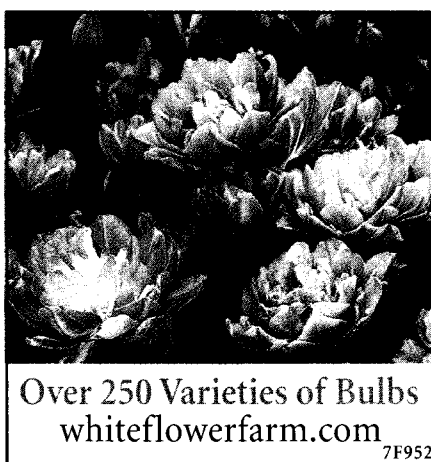
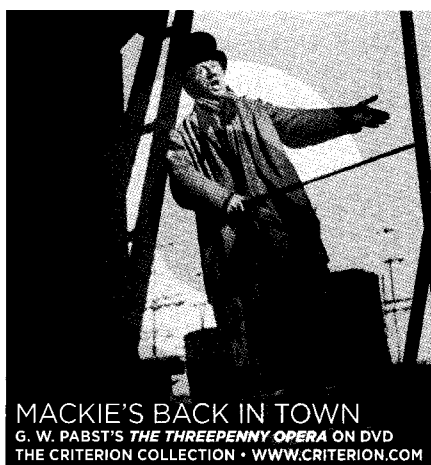
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In opening up to outside applications, Facebook could become a transformational brand, altering the Webersphere around it rather than simply being a site du jour. It could become the way the majority of us (i.e., non-teens) project our identity online: the "Google of people," as BuzzMachine's Jeff Jarvis put it. With its enforced limits and formal and aesthetic rigor, it calls to mind nothing so much as the iPod/iTunes system, a similarly elegant solution that defied the prevailing free-form logic of the digital era and reshaped the music business to its own ends.

Of course, given the ever-accelerating cycle of innovation on the Web, nothing has tenure. Like MySpace, Facebook has yet to convincingly demonstrate how it can become a full-fledged business, and to date it's shown almost tantric restraint about exploiting its ever-growing audience. Its iPod-like purity makes the monetization puzzle all the more complex—not a problem for MySpace, which has the formal cohesion of Times Square circa 1977. Potentially, Facebook could follow the Google path and monetize what it knows about its users. Facebook has detailed and deep information about their interests and preferences, but even at 30 million or 40 million members, it's not clear if there's enough scale to make Google-style money. In the process, Facebook could lose people like me who came to it precisely because it isn't a carnival midway. More promisingly, it could use its base to start offering more-advanced e-mail and IM applications, universal search, photo and video sharing.

In the meantime, MySpace is quickly revving up its own open-source strategy, and presumably will have countered Facebook's gambit in some substantive way by the time you read this. (In July, for example, MySpace introduced a very Facebook-like feature that allows you to track what your friends are doing on their pages. Because you have to click through to a separate page to see this info, however, it's far less satisfying.) The influential tech/design blogger Jason Kottke has suggested that Facebook's new strategy is intrinsically flawed. It is, he argues

merely recapitulating the subscriber-era AOL's failed strategy—often called its “walled garden” strategy—by making most Facebook pages inaccessible to Google search, and generally behaving like a large corporate intranet: in short, “AOL 2.0.” “In competitive markets, open and messy trumps closed and controlled in the long run,” Kottke wrote:

Everything you can do on Facebook with ease is possible using a loose coalition of blogging software, IM clients, email, Twitter, Flickr, Google Reader, etc. Sure, it's not as automatic or easy, but anyone can participate and the number of things to see and do on the web outnumbers the number of things you can see and do on Facebook by several orders of magnitude (and always will).

I'm instinctively sympathetic to this argument, having thought the same of MySpace, but I'm beginning to wonder if it's wrong. Openness and messiness are indeed the characteristics that make

the Web so different from other forms of media, if indeed the Web can be called “media” at all. But it has always been the push-me/pull-you between order and disorder that has made the Internet more than merely a vast agglomeration of stuff. Search engines, for starters, gave shape and order to this infinitude, while also transforming most everything else on the Web by forcing it to compete on a search-keyword basis. The search engine, for example, is why AOL's subscriber service became vestigial and why Yahoo is in trouble now. Who needs a portal to choose generic pieces of information for you when Google can find you anything you need in a flash?

The iTunes system is further evidence that people do not always prefer infinite choice: It is dominant despite being more expensive and less flexible than its rivals. It succeeds because it is simple, intuitive, and functional. Ditto for Nintendo Wii, which became the breakout hit of the last round of video-game player wars by

offering fewer bells and whistles, but better packaged. Facebook, likewise, is imposing the right limits—it's almost New Victorian in that regard. It is a connection engine that successfully mirrors how most of us want to live our lives. (Most people live in suburbs for a reason.) If the overall trend on the Internet is the individual user's loss of control as corporations make money off information you unwittingly provide, Facebook is offering a way to get some of that control back. In Facebook's vision of the Web, you, the user, are in control of your persona. As BuzzMachine's Jarvis has argued, you decide how much leg you want to show (literally or metaphorically, as the case may be), and to whom. And if this model comes to dominate, which is not impossible, it could force us to rethink our disdain for the “walled garden.” This walled garden is not just AOL 2.0, because the garden has a door, and you, the user, have the key. Tea sandwiches, anyone? ■

Michael Hirschorn is an Atlantic contributing editor.

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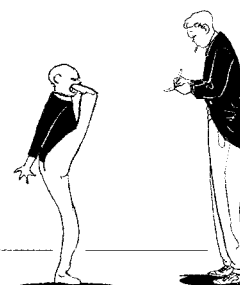
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# WORD FUGITIVES

BY BARBARA WALLRAFF



It's not that *carma*, *carcissism*, *carmladerie*, *esprit de car*, and *autobond* weren't good ideas—they were. But they were such good ideas that hordes of people thought of each of them when asked, in May, to put a name to “that happy feeling of kinship one feels for the driver of a car of the same make and model as one's own.”

A few individualistic readers' thoughts turned to the particular rather than the general. Christian Ruch, of Hopkins, Minn., wrote, “The first term that came to mind for me was *Civic pride*, because I felt such a strong bond with anyone driving a Honda Civic hatchback during the more than 10 years I drove one.” Rachel Ward, of Rochester, N.Y., wrote, “I experience a feeling of *Corollallinthistogther* when I see people driving a Corolla S, as I do.” Kristina Graber, of Three Rivers, Calif., wrote, “As a hybrid-vehicle owner, I have come to recognize a certain smugness hybrid ownership brings. Owners of such vehicles share a feeling of *hybris*.”

A few other readers' thoughts turned to Kurt Vonnegut, who died in April. Among them was Alan Feuer, of Brookline, Mass., who wrote, “In *Cat's Cradle*, Kurt Vonnegut coined *granfalloon* for the grand concept of a happenstance group. The special-case group of same-make purchasers might logically be a *brandfalloon*, and the nutty behavior it induces *brandfalloonery*, sometimes contracted to *b'foonery*.”

David McGarvey, of Lake Bluff, Ill., argued that the word sought should be “the opposite of *fender bender*: *fender friender*.” Julie Marshall, of Leona Valley,

Calif., and Jean-Yves Thuret, of Paris, France, suggested *vroommate*; David Sergenian, of Los Angeles, *jaloppel-ganger*; Doug Slaten, of Fallbrook, Calif., *me-toot*; and Alexander Rolfe, of Newberg, Ore., *vehic-hilarity*.

Charles Slat, of Monroe, Mich., had actual information to share. He wrote, “Around the Motor City, cars are known as ‘Ford-badged’ or ‘GM-badged’ or ‘Chrysler-badged’ if they sport the logos or emblems of those automakers. Same-



vehicle kinship is known as *badgeraderie*.” If that's industry jargon, it's good jargon—and besides, it's fun to say. Slat takes top honors.

The other word sought in May was for “that guy (or girl) who, once he starts dating someone new, abandons all of his friends.” A complimentary term was not wanted, and none was received. According to a few readers, such a person might be called an *affair-whether friend*. Jacob Hibel, of State College, Pa., came up with *disapparamour*; Micheal Hickerson, of

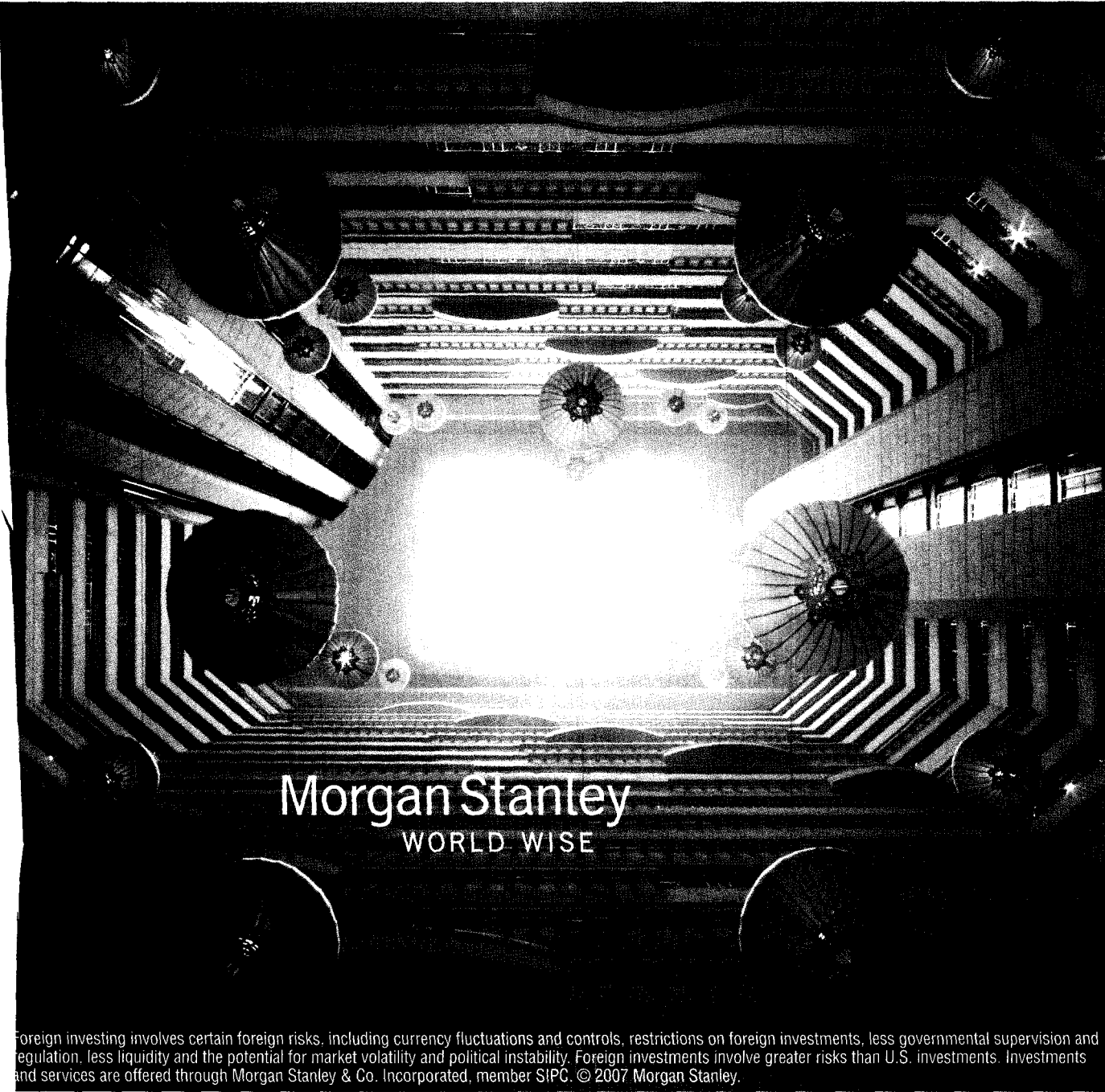
Erlanger, Ky., *sexpatriate*; Ralph Protsik, of Brookline, Mass., the *deary departed*; and Nancy Friedman, of Oakland, Calif., *romantisocial*. Eric Avery, of Gansevoort, N.Y., takes top honors for his coinage *hiberdater*.

Now LEE WESTBROCK, of Charleston, S.C., writes, “I've noticed that we are all getting better at rapidly turning off a cell phone that rings at an inappropriate moment. I'm in need of a word to describe this skill so that I can compliment my students.”

And DAVID AND MANISHA EIGNER, of Seoul, Korea, write, “We are looking for a word or phrase for when a married couple is having sex without birth control for the purpose of having a baby. *Working on it* doesn't seem really accurate and *trying for a baby* sounds as if you are at the game booth at a county fair. We would like for there to be a polite but meaningful phrase for this period in our lives.”

Send words that meet Lee Westbrook's or David and Manisha Eigner's needs to *Word Fugitives*, The Atlantic Monthly, P.O. Box 67375, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, or visit the *Word Fugitives* page on our Web site, at [www.theatlantic.com/fugitives](http://www.theatlantic.com/fugitives). Submissions must be received by October 31. Use the same addresses to submit word fugitives that you'd like The Atlantic's help in finding. Letters become the property of *Word Fugitives* and may be edited.

Readers whose queries are published and those whose words are singled out for top honors will each receive, with our thanks, a selection of recent autographed books by Atlantic authors. The next installment's correspondents will be sent *The Atomic Bazaar*, by William Langewiesche; God's Harvard: A Christian College on a Mission to Save America by Hanna Rosin; and my own *Word Fugitives*.



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# Bald, helpless and broke is how to *start life*.



NOT FINISH IT.



People tend to have a rosy view of their retirement savings. "I'll live off my pension." "I've got equity in my house." "The older you get, the cheaper it is to live." But these innocent assumptions can be quickly shattered. Luckily, Allstate has a few ideas on how America can start getting ready:

## 1. EXAMINE SOCIAL SECURITY.

**Americans will not be able to rely solely on Social Security for a comfortable retirement.** In the future, it's projected to cover an increasingly small percentage of the average retirement. There's debate as to whether it should be repaired or replaced. But what's clear is we need to reform Social Security now.

## 2. BOOST RETIREMENT PLAN ENROLLMENT.

**Companies should continue looking for ways to encourage employee participation in 401(k) plans.** One proven way to increase retirement savings is through company matches. Another is automatic

enrollment—employees are signed up for savings plans when they join the company, unless they specifically opt out.

## 3. INCREASE PERSONAL SAVINGS.

Ultimately, everyone is responsible for their own retirement. It's why we support laws that reward people for saving. **Tax-advantaged savings vehicles like annuities and IRAs are two examples of products that can help allay Baby Boomers' biggest fear: living to see the well run dry.**

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